THE IMPORTANCE OF REFINING AND CLARIFYING

THE VISION AND MISSION OF A CHURCH

AS A NEW PASTOR

A THESIS-PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF

GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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To my mother, Tula, and Aunt Yvonne,

This dissertation is dedicated to both of you as a testament for the unwavering love, support, and encouragement you have shown me throughout my life. Your sacrifices, prayers, and unwavering belief in me have been the wind beneath my wings, propelling me forward even when the journey seemed daunting. Thank you for instilling a thirst for knowledge, a strong work ethic, and a deep faith in God.

Without the willingness to learn, there is no possibility of growth.

—Shirley Chisholm

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pastoral, academic, and leadership guidance throughout my residencies. Your wisdom and

expertise have had a profound impact on me.

   Finally, I am eternally grateful to God for this learning process and the opportunity to

grow in my faith and ministry. I pray that the knowledge and skills I have gained will continue to

bear fruit throughout my life and service to others.

ABBREVIATIONS

ESV   English Standard Version

GCTS   Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

ANC   All Nations Church

KJV   King James Version

MA   Massachusetts

MS   Mission Statement

NIV   New International Version

SP   Senior pastor

VS   Vision Statement

ABSTRACT

With the arrival of a new pastor, a local Springfield, MA church finds itself at a critical

juncture. The hope is for the congregation to align with God's call. This research investigates

the awareness and comprehension of the church's existing vision and mission statements. The

primary objective is to assess whether these statements require clarification or refinement to

guide the congregation toward a shared understanding of its purpose for the future. The

research explores strategies to promote congregational dialogue, ownership of the mission and

aims to contribute to a more vibrant and cohesive faith community united in purpose and

direction.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Introduction

The author of this thesis project is writing from the perspective of a participant observer in this local church after being recently appointed as the senior pastor (SP) and serving in a bi-vocational arrangement. Before this appointment, he served as the assistant pastor for five years. The journey with this church started in 2006, with membership 10 years before he was ordained as an associate pastor. This experience familiarized him with its culture, history, members, and expression of worship. It has been observed and captured in surveys that the established vision and mission statements of the church have not been communicated and understood by the congregants in this local church. To outline how this impacts the church, it is imperative to understand what mission and vision statements are and their purposes as they relate to the identity and functions of the organization.

The Vision Statement

A vision statement (VS) is a concise and inspiring declaration that outlines the long-term aspirations and goals of an organization. It describes the desired future state or outcome the organization strives to achieve. A VS provides a clear picture of what the organization aims to

become or accomplish.[1] The importance of a VS lies in its ability to guide and align a church or any other organization in its actions, decisions, and strategies.

<p align="center">The Importance of the Vision Statement</p>

The following are some key reasons to show why a VS is important:

1. Direction and Focus: A VS assists in establishing a clear path for the organization—for profit or non-profit as a church. It serves as a compass or guiding star, providing everyone with a sense of purpose and focus. The VS answers the question, why does the organization exist? A clear VS benefits both the people involved and the organization itself. It provides a shared understanding of the ultimate goal everyone is striving for, ensuring their individual efforts continue towards the broader objectives and aspirations of the organization. This alignment encourages purpose, direction, and motivated participation within the organization.

2. Inspiration and Motivation: A skillfully constructed VS sparks passion, inspires and motivates, and drives commitment within an organization. It creates a sense of shared purpose and a compelling reason to work toward the future success and accomplishments of the organization. A strong VS can ignite passion, enthusiasm, and commitment among individuals, fostering a positive and driven organizational culture.

3. Decision-Making Framework: A VS is a decision-making framework when faced with various choices and opportunities. It helps leaders and members evaluate options

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[1] https://management.org/what-is-a-vision-statement

and make decisions that align with the long-term objectives and values of the organization. By considering whether a particular course of action supports the vision, the organization can make more informed choices that contribute to its desired future impact.

4. Communication and Member Engagement: A VS is powerful and effective. It allows the organization to articulate its aspirations and goals to members, volunteers, donors, and other stakeholders. A well-communicated vision can attract and engage individuals aligned with the mission of the organization, fostering support, participation, and long-term relationships.[2]

To sum it up, a VS is a crucial component of strategic planning for a church or non-profit organization. It provides direction, inspiration, and focus on guiding decision-making, promoting alignment, and engaging stakeholders. By establishing a compelling and aspirational vision, the organization can set itself on a path to make a meaningful impact in its mission area and create a shared understanding of its desired future state.

The Mission Statement

Imagine your organization as a vast puzzle. Each department, person, and action are a unique piece. What ties them together, giving the puzzle its meaning and purpose? That is your mission statement (MS). It is not just a fancy tagline; it is the foundational glue that unites your efforts and guides your journey. Hence, what exactly does a MS do? Simply stated, it explains

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[2] The specific wording of the statement provided does not exactly match any single source online or in books and articles. These listed benefits of the VS are core concepts that are relatively well-established and appear in numerous resources related to leadership, management, and organizational materials.

why you exist. It is not just about what you do—selling software, providing healthcare—but why it matters. What problem are you solving? What positive impact do you strive to make?[3]

The MS has two crucial purposes:

1. Internal Alignment: Think of it as a compass for your team. Regardless of the individual role, each member should feel his or her actions contribute to a larger, meaningful goal. The MS serves as a constant reminder of that shared purpose, fostering unity and direction.

2. External Connection: Like a lighthouse, your MS shines towards the outside world. It attracts customers, partners, and even talent who resonate with your values and aspirations. It becomes a window into the soul of your organization, building trust and understanding. However, crafting a powerful MS requires introspection on purpose.

While the VS can be aspirational, the MS is action-driven and practical in its application. In a church context, a MS is a concise statement that articulates what the church does and the purpose, identity, and fundamental values of the church. It represents the core reason for the existence of the church and defines its primary mission or calling within the community it serves. The MS is the guiding principle or navigation compass for the activities, ministries, and outreach efforts of the church.

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[3] https://thomasgriffin.com/what-is-a-mission-statement/

The Importance of the Mission Statement in a Church Context

The following key points show how the MS is conveyed in a church context and its importance:

1. Clarifies Purpose and Identity: A MS helps clarify the purpose and identity of the church. It succinctly communicates the reason for the existence of the church, its core beliefs, and the values it upholds. By defining its purpose, the MS provides a clear identity for the church, helping members and the community understand what it stands for and aims to achieve by how it serves.

2. Guides Decision-Making and Prioritization: A MS serves as a compass for decision-making within the church. It provides a framework for evaluating opportunities, programs, and initiatives. When faced with various choices, the MS helps church leaders and members make decisions that align with the primary mission and values of the church. It also helps prioritize activities and allocate resources effectively.

3. Unites the Congregation: A MS promotes unity and cohesion within the church community. It helps rally members around a shared purpose, creating a sense of belonging and a common focus. The MS reminds every one of their collective mission, encourages collaboration, cooperation, and a spirit of unity as they work together toward fulfilling the purpose of the church.

4. Inspires and Motivates: A well-crafted MS inspires and motivates the congregation. It articulates a compelling vision of what the church aspires to achieve and the impact it seeks to make in the lives of individuals and the

community. The MS can ignite passion, enthusiasm, and commitment among members, fostering a sense of purpose and encouraging active participation in the ministries and outreach efforts of the church.

5. Communicates to the Congregation: A MS is a communication tool to speak to and promote the purpose and values of the church to the community. It helps external participants, such as newcomers, visitors, and potential partners, understand the mission of the church and what it offers. A clear and impactful MS can attract individuals who resonate with the values and mission of the church, fostering engagement and building relationships.

Why Do Vision and Mission Clarity Matter?

It is important to point out that the VS and MS are not mutually exclusive. The VS paints a picture of the desired future state and overarching goal, while a MS defines the present purpose, activities, and identity of the organization. The VS provides inspiration and direction, while the MS focuses on the current mission and practical actions of the organization. Both statements are essential in guiding an organization and ensuring its activities align with its long-term aspirations and core purpose.

A Case Study of the Problem and Its Context

Every organization, be it a church or any other, requires a well-defined sense of direction and purpose to flourish. Guiding principles like MS and VS help organizations set goals and make decisions to fulfill their purpose. Nevertheless, not all churches have a well-defined

MS and VS, which can significantly affect their impact and effectiveness. In this case study, we will explore the repercussions of a church not having a MS and VS and examine how it can affect various aspects of church life.

Background

All Nations Church (ANC) is a church in a suburban area in Massachusetts (MA), which we will learn more about later in this chapter. ANC was established in 1976 with a simple mission to engage its congregants with weekly worship services, primarily on Sundays. ANC lacks a recognized MS and VS that articulates its purpose and direction.

Impact on Leadership

Without a clear and intentional emphasis on the MS and VS, the leadership of ANC struggles to provide clear direction to the congregation. The lack of a unified purpose makes it difficult for leaders to make decisions, set priorities, and allocate resources effectively. There is a lack of clarity on the overall direction the church should take, leading to confusion and inconsistency in leadership decisions. The leadership team lacks a common framework to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of their ministry efforts, resulting in ad-hoc decision-making and limited accountability. As a result, the leadership team faces challenges in aligning the activities and initiatives of the church with a common vision, leading to a lack of focus and progress.

Impact on Congregation

The absence of a MS and VS also affects the congregation of ANC. The lack of a clear purpose and direction has resulted in a disjointed congregation with different expectations and priorities. Members may have different ideas about the purpose of the church and what it should prioritize, which has led to conflicting opinions and a lack of unity. Without a compelling vision that inspires and motivates the congregation, engaging members and fostering a sense of ownership and commitment toward the mission of the church will continue to prove challenging. As a result, attendance at worship services has stagnated, and engagement in church activities and programs has decreased, leading to a lack of growth and vitality in the congregation.

Impact on Outreach

Another area impacted by the absence of a MS and VS is the outreach efforts of ANC. Developing focused and effective outreach programs became challenging without clearly understanding the purpose and direction of the church. The lack of a guiding vision makes it difficult to identify and prioritize target communities or groups to reach out to and to design appropriate and impactful outreach initiatives. This resulted in a scattered approach to outreach with limited impact and results. The absence of a MS and VS also makes it challenging to communicate the purpose and identity of the church to the broader community, which can hinder efforts to attract new visitors and connect with people seeking spiritual guidance.

The absence of a MS and a VS has significant consequences for ANC. It impacts the ability of the leadership to provide direction, sense of unity and engagement of the

congregation, and the effectiveness of outreach efforts. Without a clear MS and VS, the church struggles to articulate its purpose, make strategic decisions, and achieve its mission. It is essential for the leadership team of ANC—and any other church or organization—to develop and communicate a compelling MS and VS that provides a clear sense of direction, fosters unity, and guides decision-making to fulfill the purpose of the church and impact the community positively.

A Closer Look at the Challenges

Historically, ANC has not intentionally tried establishing a MS or VS to identify its modus operandi. "Traditional" is a word that can be best used to describe the attitude and function of the church. For example, traditionally, the programs of the church often continued because the founding pastor started them. It did not matter if the program was well supported or attended. This was evident when the successor to the founding pastor tried to change the Sunday morning worship time to start worship service earlier than it was traditionally done. The idea of the change was met with resistance because long-standing members had grown accustomed to the original service times. The intended reason of the pastor for the change in service time was to encourage and enable members to have more time with their family on Sundays.

Another instance of how the lack of mission clarity impacted response to a program change for the church was experienced when there was a decision made to cancel Sunday night services because of low attendance. Both changes faced opposition, not because they were inherently wrong or would hurt the congregation, but because these changes were against the traditions of the church and because of a lack of understanding of the MS and VS of the church.

In retrospect, these two examples—among others—can be seen as a correlation to a lack of clarity on the goals and aspirations of the church. Why were these changes made? Were these changes randomly implemented? Ambiguity leads to anxiety and a fear of loss, and making these changes without the members understanding how they would help the church led to some members pushing back. In conversations with the previous SP, he shared that navigating the enormous amount of resistance was frustrating whenever he made changes intended to move the church forward.

Between 2014-2016, the SP in position before the author of this thesis-project was named, decided that the church should become a more outward focus ministry emphasizing community engagement. This was the start of a transition for ANC from being primarily inward-focused and somewhat culturally isolated, as the evangelism was unintentionally focused on friends and family who were Caribbean natives. ANC is located in a multicultural and multiracial part of the city, though its congregation could be classified as homogeneous of Caribbean ethnicity and culture. When the declaration was made for the church to be more engaged in the community, it was a call for the members to look beyond their familiar culture and reach people where they are, regardless of culture and race.

Nonetheless, on closer observation from a quantitative perspective, it was evident that most members participated in programs that impacted the community. This was apparent in their involvement in programs such as the food pantry, which distributes food to those in need. The members would also be actively involved in efforts to aid the homeless through partnerships with other non-profit agencies. Thus, what is the issue? It was learned that many members involved in these programs were participants with a "Messianic complex"—serving

with the notion that the community needs them to be saved and rescued from hunger. This

consensus was arrived at because members served with the mindset that the community

needed them instead of being moved by the message and compassion of the Gospel to serve

others. The residents of the community are categorized as "them" and "us." The church is not

"them." These claims are not mere assumptions, but observations made in conversations with

several church members.

As the idiom states, "Hindsight is 2020."[4] In reflection, things are obvious that were not

apparent from the beginning. We can assess past decisions more plainly than at the time of the

original decision. The call for ANC to become more engaged in the community was not clearly

defined to clarify what engagement looks like, especially from a biblical perspective. There was

a lack of emphasis on the MS and VS clarity of the church, which resulted in members clinging

to the cultural worship expressions of the church and less about its missional direction and

objectives.

History and Context of the Local Congregation

ANC was established in 1971 by a Jamaican bishop and his family of six. The founder of

ANC was part of a large international Pentecostal denomination. Nevertheless, the church was

planted and established as non-denominational and non-affiliated to the denomination which

the bishop previously served. ANC was predominantly a Jamaican church at its founding. Today,

the membership composition of ANC ethnically is primarily African Americans and Jamaicans,

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[4] Hindsight: Refers to our understanding and knowledge of something after it has occurred; 20/20: Refers to perfect vision, used metaphorically to represent clear understanding.

with smaller numbers of Haitians, Grenadians, Nigerians, Puerto Ricans, and a small percentage of White Americans.

ANC has been in the same neighborhood of the city for the last 30 years. It was relocated to a new neighborhood within the same city three years ago to the date of this writing. ANC is in an urban setting in the city of Springfield, MA, a multicultural and multiethnic city[5] that has a population of approximately 154,000 residents. The population demographics[6] of the city includes 38% Hispanic/Latino, 51% White, 22% Black or African American, with Asians and other ethno-racial groups constituting about 2.4%. Census data for this city also highlights that approximately 11% of residents are foreign-born. Additionally, 61.2% of residents of Springfield speak English at home, compared to 32.5% of residents who speak Spanish at home. Conversely, the church has 99% of Blacks of the Caribbean diaspora, including African Americans.

The congregation does all their print and verbal communication and worship in English, even though they serve and are in a predominantly Spanish-speaking neighborhood. From a numerical standpoint, ANC has a congregation size of around 90 adults and 20 children. Post-COVID-19 lockdown–after the Summer of 2021—the average weekly attendance is approximately 65, including children. Furthermore, there is an average of 25 active and engaged online attendees. The church also operates a food pantry since 1999 and, as of 2022, serves approximately 900 families monthly. ANC is transitioning from a "family-sized" church

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[5] The words *multiethnic* and *multicultural* will be used interchangeably and a distinction will be made when necessary.

[6] "QuickFacts Springfield City, Massachusetts. United States." *United States Census Bureau*, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/springfieldcitymassachusetts,MA,US/PST045216 (Accessed 20 July 2022). Data may not sum to totals due to rounding. Population numbers are rounded to the nearest 100.

with a small congregation that operates like an extended family towards a more "pastoral-

sized" church.

> Pastoral-size church (51 to 150): A coalition of two or three family and friendship networks unified around the person and role of the pastor. Clergy time is largely taken up maintaining a direct pastoral relationship with each member, coordinating the work of a small leadership circle, personally conducting worship, and leading small-group programs such as Bible study. The governing board usually operates like a committee, arranging much of the day-to-day life of the congregation. Members recognize each other's faces, know most people's names, and will notice if someone new is present at worship.[7]

The Cultural and Geographical Background of the Congregation

The leadership of the ANC identifies and promotes the church as an "American"

congregation that just happens to have a majority of Caribbean nationals. Be that as it may,

people outside ANC perceive it as a Jamaican church since it was the dominant ethnicity at its

founding. This perception of ANC being Jamaican is observed when people outside the church

reference the church. They often refer to it as "the Jamaican church." When viewing the racial

composition of the congregation, ANC is racially homogenously Black but multicultural in the

ethnic diversity of its membership.

Looking at the congregation through the lens of the racial composition of the current

membership, it is safe to say it is not multiracial but can be categorized as a "Black church."[8]

Even so, the church can also be classified as a "multicultural church." Elmer L. Towns, vice

president of Liberty University, provides some explanations on the term "multiracial" which

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[7] Alice Mann, *Raising the Roof: The Pastoral-To-Program Sized Transition*. (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, Incorporated, 2001), p. 5.

[8] *The Black Church|American Experience|PBS*, Accessed July 20, 2002. https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/godinamerica-black-church/

indicates the presence of many different races in a church. That is easy to achieve, where people from all different races come and sit in a common worship service. But the term "multicultural" emphasizes different racial groups bringing their culture into the worship service—into the choir, pulpit, communities, and the whole way they do church."[9] ANC does not intentionally try to be multicultural. It does not brand itself as multicultural. Nevertheless, its reach in the neighborhood happens to be cross-cultural because of the neighborhood's racial makeup.

The Mission and the Context of the Congregation

The previous leadership of ANC stated that the purpose of the church is "Knowing Christ and engaging our community." This statement functions as a tagline but is rarely used as a framework for decision-making or guiding principles of the operations and functions of the church. The documented MS is "to cultivate passionate disciples of Jesus Christ, who will engage and impact communities, cities, and nations for the Kingdom of God." This MS was established seven years ago. The SP presented this MS to the congregation because of where and how he felt God was leading the congregation. The basis of this MS is for ANC to be more intentional about discipleship and community engagement.

The church, at its inception and the two-plus decades that followed, saw this congregation being inward-focused. ANC existed in a location where most members did not live within a four miles radius. In surveys done over the years, they have shown that residents living

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[9] Elmer L. Towns, *What's Right with the Church: A Manifesto of Hope* (Ventura, CA: Regal Gospel Light, 2009), p. 166.

within a one-mile radius of the church's address were mostly more aware of as a food pantry than as a church. The residents in the neighborhood saw ANC more as a food pantry. The mission of the pantry was clear—to provide food to those in need no questions asked. Could the church be more impactful in the community as a place of faith by clarifying its mission and acting accordingly?

The Leadership Background and Structure of the Congregation

ANC has only had three persons in the position of SP since its inception, with the third SP being appointed less than a year to date. The original members and leaders have stayed close to the culture of the founding pastor. When the church was established, the founder concentrated more on membership attendance as a sign of faithfulness. Moreover, the congregation was more program-driven, with the founder being a solo leader with a hand in every aspect of the church. There was a limited emphasis on the mission clarity of the church. The founder was a solo leader for the duration of his SP tenure. The selection of leaders of various departments was based almost exclusively on "faithfulness" and less on skill sets. Besides, no formal or purposeful training was done with leaders, and there were no direct attempts to have current leaders mentor the upcoming leaders.

The second SP has been a church member for 40 years and served 19 years as the SP. During those 19 years, ANC did not experience a significant numerical growth. Withal, it has seen a steady shift towards a less traditional Caribbean church and high dependency on the SP. One of the key elements that are lacking in the current church operations and processes is the absence of succession plans, a lack of active mentorship and development of potential leaders.

During his tenure, the second SP sought to reshape the structure of the church. Currently, the organizational structure and polity of ANC are functionally Episcopal. In this structure, the SP is the general overseer of the congregation and its affiliate church in Jamaica. The SP has a board of advisors comprised of five to seven people. The objectives of this board include but are not limited to creating policies, financial reporting, performance assessment, strategic planning, compensation review, budget approval, and ensuring legal compliance.

One ever-present challenge is the lack of time, as all church leaders work full-time outside the church. All the SP, except for the founder, have been bi-vocational. This challenge of church leaders not being full-time employees of ANC has led to varying limitations in the operation of the church. An example of this is seen in the senior leadership not having the time to be active and intentional in leadership development, which is a noticeable challenge. On the other hand, this issue of not having time will need to be overcome or navigated reasonably to initiate and cultivate a mentoring ethos. ANC is in the process of exploring new leaders, especially with the recent appointment of a new SP. The leadership structure of the church—much like the congregation—is going through a transition, and the new leadership seeks to establish a clear identity, goals, and strategy based on well-crafted vision and mission statements.

Proposal to Address Thesis-Project Statement

The hypothesis of this thesis-project aims to assess the awareness of the vision and mission of the church among its members and evaluate the effectiveness of a training program in improving awareness. The evaluation will begin with an initial survey of leaders and the

congregation to assess their current awareness of the vision and mission of the church.

Following the survey, a training will focus on the vision and mission and their relevance to the

church. After the training, a second survey will be conducted to assess the impact of the

training on awareness of the vision and mission of the church.

The evaluation will be based on the premise that leaders play a key role in influencing

change and that people are purpose-driven and are influenced when they understand the

purpose. The training session will be designed to help people—members and leaders—

understand the vision and mission of the church and why they are essential. The training will

also speak to the extent to which the vision and mission drive all programs of the local

congregation.

The findings of this survey will have implications for church leaders and the SP. The

survey will provide insights into the current state of awareness of the vision and mission of the

church among its members. It will also provide evidence of the effectiveness of training in

improving awareness. The findings will be helpful for church leadership in designing and

implementing programs to increase awareness of the vision and mission of the church among

its members.

Conclusion

This introductory chapter laid the groundwork for understanding the research context

and identifying the central inquiry addressed in this study. Subsequent chapters will focus on

testing and refining the research hypothesis and ultimately solidifying the thesis-project

statement. Chapter Two delves into the theological and biblical foundations of leadership

within the church, including a discussion of the definition and purpose of the church. Chapter

Three provides a comprehensive overview and critical analysis of relevant literature pertaining

to leadership, vision, and mission clarity, specifically within the context of church communities.

Furthermore, Chapter Four presents an overview of the research methodology employed,

detailing the chosen approach used to gather objective data and validate the research

hypothesis. The last chapter—Chapter Five—presents the outcomes and observations derived

from the assessments described in Chapter Four, connecting them back to the research

question and refining the overall understanding of the issue.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter examines the area of theological and biblical frameworks underpinning leadership within the church. This exploration goes beyond simple definitions, examining the essence of leading within a faith-based community (church). The chapter establishes a foundation for understanding the role and responsibilities of leadership within the church by examining relevant Scriptures and theological perspectives. Additionally, it investigates the definition and purpose of the church itself, providing a crucial lens through which to analyze leadership practices and their impact.

What Is the Church?

What is the church? Depending on the cultural, theological, and general understanding of Scripture of the respondent, this question can be profound or simple. The church is an organization that often finds itself tethering on the fence of social and cultural relevance, all while ensuring that its theological pillars remain intact. To define the church, there is a tendency to describe it in the context of its building and institutional clout in society. Defining the church can also be challenging as there is tension between its cultural and theological significance. Historically, the church has the existential challenges of being culturally relevant and remaining a meaningful witness of Christ. Christians across varying theological views

universally subscribe to the view of the church of the Nicene creed, "…And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church."[1]

A brief survey of Christian history reveals a breathtaking diversity of views among the followers of Jesus Christ concerning the nature, structure, polity, and mission of their Lord's church.[2] The church is often defined or illustrated from varying cultural perspectives. As a result, some would say the church cannot exist outside of culture, and as a result, it is forced to be culturally relevant. This view is steeped in the cultural conditioning of the Christendom worldview and era. In the Christendom era, the vision of society is directed primarily by Christian ideals. One such example is the numerous blue laws governing commerce on Sundays in many states.

> In Christendom, the growth of the Church is in no small way a benefit of her prominence. She attracts new members because her presence is positively woven into the social fabric. Catholic institutions grow in number and stature within Christendom. This too is a perk of the elite status of the Church. In a time of Christendom, the Church aims to maintain the influence she has on the culture, the great advantage being God's truth is readily available to anyone without obstructions or restrictions. In Christendom, Christianity is invited to influence all sectors of society – politics, education, medicine, arts, and sports. The major institutions that drive industry, education, medicine, and the economy might even bear God's name or refer to him in their constitutions and policies. In a Christendom era, Christians can aspire to leadership in any realm of society.[3]

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[1] *Historic Creeds and Confessions*, electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Lexham Press, 1997).

[2] James A. Patterson, "The Church in History: Ecclesiological Ideals and Institutional Realities," in *The Community of Jesus: A Theology of the Church*, ed. Kendell Easley and Christopher W. Morgan. (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2013), p. 155.

[3] https://bccatholic.ca/voices/brett-powell/the-end-of-christendom-time-for-church-to-shift-into-apostolic-mode

On the contrary, some believe that the church should not ignore their cultural context and society but should not be a part of the secular aspects of their society. At play here is the interpretation of various Scriptures that indicate that Christians should be counter cultural. "If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."[4] Though being counter-cultural does not require one to be in total isolation or opposition to one's culture, this, among several other Scriptures, is sometimes used as proof text not to engage culture and society.

The varying perspectives of the nature and definition of the church should not be used to render the very mention of the word church as a pejorative. Many may misunderstand the nature of the church to varying degrees, but its definition can certainly be found in the Scriptures. As theologians and Christians, we must have a biblical framework, worldview, and definition in responding to the question, "What is the church?" or even the ubiquitous question of the relevancy of the church.

The church is not merely an organization but the Divinely established body or community of faith through which the Gospel is preached and believers are nurtured.[5] The church can also be described as missional. Jesus, in His final exhortation to His disciples, commanded them to be mobilized as His witness here on Earth. Leslie Newbigin states that, "The very general belief of Christians in most churches that the church can exist without being a

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[4] John 15:19. All Scripture passages are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV), unless otherwise noted.

[5] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church.* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008), p.148.

mission involves a radical contradiction of the church's being."[6] Moreover, the church is the

body of people in any social or cultural context. The people have committed their lives to Christ

and who worship and follow Him in obedient discipleship, faithfully receiving both Word and

sacrament, and witnessing of Him, not only by godly character and example but by practical

and compassionate action. Where truest to itself, the church is both salt and light in any given

society—as salt [deterring] decay and as light dispelling darkness.[7]

A Word Study of The Church

The word "church" is primarily derived from the Greek words *kuriakon* and *ekklēsia.*

Kuriakon, which means "belonging to the Lord," is a word which is never applied to the church

in the New Testament period, although it is found twice in the New Testament as an adjective

applying to The Lord's Supper and to the Lord's Day.[8] The usage of the word *kuriakon*

emphasizes the church being the property and subject of God's sovereignty. Theologian Louis

Berkhof suggests that *kuriakon* principally was used as the "designated place where the church

assembled. This place was conceived of as belonging to the Lord and was therefore called *to*

kuriakon."[9]

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[6] Newbigin, *The Household*, p. 148.

[7] https://lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles-php/896/02-2008

[8] 1 Cor 11:20; Rv 1:10. Guy P. Duffield and Nathaniel M. Van Cleave, *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology.* (Los Angeles, CA: L.I.F.E. Bible College, 1983), pp. 419-420.

[9] L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1938), p. 557.

Quite the reverse, the Greek word *ekklēsia* or *ecclesia* is more broadly used to define

the church in the New Testament. "In the New Testament [*ekklēsia*] is the translation of the

Greek word, which is synonymous with the Hebrew *kahal* of the Old Testament, both words

meaning simply an assembly, the character of which can only be known from the connection in

which the word is found."[10] Ecclesiology, which is the study of the church, is a derivative of

ekklēsia.

> The word *ekklēsia* means "an assembly of people." The term is derived from two Greek
> words, *ek,* meaning "out from," and *kaleo* which means "to call." Originally, "the ones
> called out" had reference to the legislative body of citizens of the Greek republic called
> from their communities to serve the country. When we refer to a session of the State
> "Assembly," we are using the word "assembly" in exactly the same way the Greeks used
> the term *ekklēsia*.[11]

The Christians have always, regardless of their socio-cultural context, seen the church as

the assembly of God's people. There may be disagreement in the local church regarding the

localized expressions of the church but there is a mutual agreement that the universal church is

undoubtedly the Body of Jesus Christ by most Christians. The *ekklēsia* in the New Testament

embodies the idea of "assembly" in several Scriptures such as Acts 19:32, 39, 41. "The assembly

was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not

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[10] M. G. Easton, *Illustrated Bible Dictionary and Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature.* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1893), p. 146.

[11] Duffield and Van Cleave, *Foundations*, p. 420.

even know why they were there." [12] "If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal assembly."[13] "After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly."[14]

Ekklēsia also denotes the whole body of the redeemed, all those whom the Father has given to Christ, the invisible Catholic church. "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything."[15] "And to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."[16] "To the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect."[17]

Looking at the word *ekklēsia* from a biblical and historical perspective, the Scriptures indicate that the church was dynamic in its identity and function. This paradigm is observed when even a few Christians gathered or agreed in observing the ordinances of the Gospel; they were considered as an *ekklēsia*.[18] Similarly, when Christians within a city or region assembled together in varying settings to worship, this was also classified as an *ekklēsia.* "Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of

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[12] Acts 19:32, New International Version (NIV).

[13] Acts 19:39, NIV.

[14] Acts 19:42, NIV.

[15] Eph 5:23-24, NIV.

[16] Eph 5:27, NIV.

[17] Heb 12:23, NIV.

[18] Rom 16:5; Col 4:15.

Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul."[19] "To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours."[20] "On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria."[21] "The whole body of professing Christians throughout the world[22] are the church of Christ."[23]

Regular Meetings, Shared Purpose: The Ekklēsia Defined

The term *ekklēsia*—in singular—is used 17 times in the book of Acts in a Christian sense. Nine of those refer to the Jerusalem congregation.

- Fear came on the whole church. (5:11)
- Persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem. (8:1)
- Saul, however, was ravaging the church. (8:3)
- The report about them reached the ears of the church in Jerusalem. (11:22)
- Herod cruelly attacked some who belonged to the church. (12:1)
- Prayer was being made earnestly to God for him by the church. (12:5)
- They were welcomed by the church, the apostles, and the elders. (15:4)
- The apostles and the elders, with the whole church, decided to select men from among them. (15:22)
- He went up and greeted the church. (18:22)[24]

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[19] Acts 13:1, NIV.

[20] 1 Cor 1:2, NIV.

[21] Acts 8:1, NIV.

[22] 1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13; Matt 16:18.

[23] Easton, *Illustrated*, p. 146.

[24] Kendell H. Easley, "The Church in Acts and Revelation: New Testament Bookends," in *The Community of Jesus: A Theology of the Church.* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2013), p. 67.

The congregation in Jerusalem is what is often referred to as the early church or primitive church. In Jerusalem, the *ekklēsia* was comprised of followers—mostly Jews that were converted to Christianity. The book of Acts journals the establishment, mission, and growth of this church. Acts 2:42 explains how those who made up the *ekklēsia* "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayers." The church in Jerusalem demonstrates the church being a witness of the Gospel of Jesus in their compassion for each other, their devotion to the teaching of Jesus and their leadership structure. "The leadership of the Jerusalem congregation consisted of apostles and elders.[25] The only other church organization noted is the (possibly temporary) service of the Seven.[26]"[27]

The *ekklēsia* formed in Jerusalem was a model for other gatherings in the early missionary undertakings of the early church. The apostolic church may have been started in Jerusalem, but it did not stay there; it grew beyond the boundaries of Jerusalem.

- "For a whole year they met with the church."[28]

- "In the local church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers."[29]

- "After they arrived and gathered the church together …"[30]

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[25] Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22-23; 16:4.

[26] Acts 6:3-6; 21:8.

[27] Easley, "The Church," p. 67.

[28] Acts 11:26.

[29] Acts 13:1

[30] Acts 14:27.

- "When they had been sent on their way by the church …"[31]

- "He sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church."[32]

- "The Holy Spirit has appointed you as overseers, to shepherd the church of God."[33]

A close examination of the usage of the apostle Paul of the term church—*ekklēsia*—

is even more crucial due to the fact that,

> Each local assembly is a full representation of *the ekklēsia*, not merely a part of it. This becomes especially clear when he uses the body image in 1 Corinthians 12–14 about the group of Christians in Corinth. They manifest locally all the members of the body of Christ. This means that Paul would deny that a local assembly is but a partial "church," though he might say that it is a part of the universal *ekklēsia*. Each local congregation is a full representation, whether small or large, of the whole body of Christ and of the whole Christ. For Paul, the Corinthian *ekklēsia* is God's whole option in Corinth.[34]

Two ideas are noteworthy. First, the leaders are called "elders" and "overseers," with a

responsibility to shepherd or pastor their flock. Second, Luke uses the same term to refer to the

Gentile congregations—e*kklēsia*—that he used earlier to refer to the all-Jewish church in

Jerusalem. This same meaning—"local assembly"—is found in the plural instances of *ekklēsia* in

the book of Acts. There are only two such occurrences: "He traveled through Syria and Cilicia,

strengthening the churches."[35] "So, the churches were strengthened in the faith."[36]

Thus, the principal way Luke uses *ekklēsia* is to refer to local, self-conscious groups of
Jesus' followers. John Stott describes the first such congregation in Jerusalem as: (1)

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[31] Acts 15:3.

[32] Acts 20:17.

[33] Acts 20:28.

[34] Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), p. 91.

[35] Acts 15:41.

[36] Acts 16:5.

learning (commitment to apostolic teaching and Scripture), (2) loving (mutual concern and fellowship), (3) worshipping (prayer and the Lord's Supper), and (4) evangelizing (sharing the Good News). This surely was the model followed by other congregations mentioned in Acts.[37]

While studying the word *ekklesia* can shed light on the core of the church, it does not tell the whole story. It leaves us wondering about the true purpose and mission of the church. What is it called to do in the world? Answering this question shapes how churches view their role and responsibilities.

Historically and currently, there is an existential disagreement culturally and doctrinally in the expression of the church—*ekklēsia*. Yet theologically, there is mutual agreement that the church is the community of believers in Jesus. The *ekklēsia*, theologically, implies that leadership is essential. Leadership, however, cannot exist without followers; therefore, the church comprises people who play different roles. From a biblical perspective, the church is referenced locally and universally. The local church should be free to be culturally aligned with their local context and have a culturally relevant worship expression. The universal church is a composition of all followers of Jesus Christ worldwide, regardless of culture and language. Often, when people who are not Christians refer to the church, they are speaking of the universal church.

Ecclesiology is not uniformly expressed; to develop an adequate of the church doctrine, we cannot rely on culture but on Christ as the blueprint. Too often, debates about the role, purpose, and significance of the church are centered around cultural context; while context is important, it should not supersede the relevance of Christ. The Protestant church serves as an

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[37] Easley, "The Church," p. 68.

example of a movement that sought to define the role of the church by using the concept of

solus Christus—Christ alone. Martin Luther and the other reformers believed that the notion of

Christ alone was vitally important because all other positions held by Christians were unified by

solus Christus. Hence, as it relates to ecclesiology, all the expressions of the church, from

leadership, organizational structure, and mission, should be centered *on* Christ and Him alone.

Christ is placed at the center of the church and the doctrine of the church is shaped

through the embodiment of Christ in us. The church becomes "that community of people who

look to discover what God is actively doing in the world around them and then join themselves

to that work. The church is that community of people gathered around Jesus Christ in order to

participate in his life and incarnate it into the context where he has placed them."[38]

Leadership Defined

One may define leadership in a hierarchical top-down manner, with the power

relationship of followers being subjected to the authority or influence of the leader to make

changes. Peter G. Northouse states that another view of "leadership [is] as a transformational

process that moves followers to accomplish more than is usually expected of them."[39]

Northouse continues his discourse on leadership definition by emphasizing that,

"despite the multitude of ways in which leadership has been conceptualized, the following

components can be identified as central to the [leadership] phenomenon: (a) Leadership is a

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[38] Tim Keel, *Intuitive Leadership: Embracing a Paradigm of Narrative, Metaphor, and Chaos.* (Ada, MI: Baker Books, 2007).

[39] Peter Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 7th ed. (Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, 2016). Kindle, Loc. 1205.

process, (b) leadership involves influence, (c) leadership occurs in groups, and (d) leadership involves common goals".[40] Based on these components, Northouse defines leadership as: "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."[41] The definition presented by Northouse is concise and practical of what leadership should be in a general sense. Nevertheless, Tod Bolsinger provides other definitions that could be applied in most cases, both conceptually and practically. "Leadership is energizing a community of people toward their own transformation in order to accomplish a shared mission in the face of a changing world."[42]

Leadership is not an individual endeavor but rather a collaborative process that emerges from within a community. This notion is underscored by the diverse definitions of leadership that exist. Professor Jim Singleton of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (GCTS) emphasizes this point by identifying three key characteristics of leadership, highlighting the essential role of community in leadership development and effectiveness in leadership.[43] These characteristics are:

1. Leadership involves others.
2. Leadership involves a destination.
3. Leadership involves change.

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[40] Northouse, *Leadership*, Kindle, Loc. 1213.

[41] Northouse, *Leadership*, Kindle, Loc. 1222.

[42] Tod E. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory.* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2018). p. 36.

[43] Jim Singleton, "Definition of Leadership" (DMin, Residency One, GCTS, June 10, 2019).

Consequently, leadership requires the leader to know whom he or she is leading or intends to lead. Leadership is not an unending journey, but it ought to have a goal and destination clearly defined. It is necessary to outline a theological leadership framework to evaluate leadership from a biblical or church context. Furthermore, a theological and biblical perspective will be used to unpack the three key characteristics of leadership mentioned above.

Theology of Leadership

A theological standard for leadership can be theorized and developed as leadership perspectives, applications, and patterns that are consistent with the principles and practices of Christianity. From a biblical perspective, more extensive discourse on leadership needs to be done. Nonetheless, the entire canon and narrative of Scriptures highlights different types of leaders and their approaches to leadership. Notwithstanding, the basis of leadership principles or expectations in the Bible is characterized by Jesus as servanthood.[44] The Bible also gives examples of varying types of leaders, such as kings leading politically and prophets leading from a spiritual position for the nation. It is not difficult to see the principles of leadership and the characteristics of leaders in the Bible in the following examples.

- Deuteronomy 1:13 – "Choose some wise, understanding and respected men from each of your tribes, and I will set them over you."[45] (Keywords: choose, wise, understanding, leaders)

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[44] Mark 10:42-45.

[45] Dt 1:13, NIV.

- Acts 20:28 – "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood." (Keywords: overseers, shepherd, church)

- Proverbs 11:14 – "For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is won through many advisers." (Keywords: guidance, advisers)

"Christian leadership shares much with local secular leadership in terms of cultural values and patterns. However, it clearly differs from secular, business, or political leadership in terms of its biblical value base, the use of spiritual power, accountability to Christ, and goal in the *missio dei.*"[46] The key difference with biblical leadership from secular is rooted in the core values of Scripture. The Christian leader role is often to fulfill the mission of God and not self-serving. "Leaders and leadership are determined not by the number of followers but by the changes effected over time for the good of God's world."[47] The biblical principle of leadership is not based on the number of followers but on the obedience of the leader to the instructions given by God. "Christian leaders, and all leaders who follow biblical patterns, exercise their power to the greatest extent possible in ways and for ends consistent with all things good, honorable, and according to the will of God."[48]

There is a need today for exceptional leadership because we live in a time of rapid changes. People usually look to leaders in times of uncertainty for answers or a steady hand to

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[46] A. Scott Moreau, Harold Netland, and Charles Van Engen, *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, Baker Reference Library. (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Baker Books; A. Scott Moreau, 2000), p. 567.

[47] Robert B. Sloan, "A Biblical Model of Leadership," in *Christian Leadership Essentials: A Handbook for Managing Christian Organizations*, ed. David S. Dockery. (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011), p. 8.

[48] Sloan, "A Biblical," p. 9.

guide them. Therefore, leaders often must change how they lead to adjust to their changing

context. These scenarios occur not just in the "world" but also in the church. Consequently,

Godly and biblical leadership is essential to lead God's people. The Bible gives us examples of

the negative impact of what happens when leaders fail to be accountable to the Word of God.

"Passages throughout the book of Judges are representative of the failures of God's people for

lack of leadership as throughout this book of Israel's ongoing and often shocking levels of evil

are explained with the comment that Israel had no king."[49]

The narrative of the Scriptures shows that God has consistently inserted leadership in

some form or model for His people. Leadership was provided by prophets, kings, judges,

priests, apostles, elders, and deacons. Leadership structures may vary across centuries,

decades, cultures, and regions, but the concept of having leaders is never neglected in the

Bible. "Christian leadership is a calling from God, which means an initial encounter with him is

essential. From Abraham through Paul, story after story is told of leaders encountering God,

receiving God's instructions to them, and their struggle to carry those forward to lead his

people."[50]

The church does not exist without people, but the church also needs leaders. God has

promised His church His presence, and with His presence comes His Leadership. In the

Scriptures, there is a pattern of leadership that God outlines implicitly. The leader serves at the

will of the mission of God. Also, the leader is required to serve and not be only served. In the

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[49] Jane Overstreet, "Leadership," ed. William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Global Dictionary of Theology: A Resource for the Worldwide Church.* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), p. 484.

[50] Overstreet, "Leadership," p. 484.

Old Testament, we see examples of God expecting leaders such as Moses, to serve the people

not based on his emotions but based on God's directions. The same is seen with King Saul,

where God reminded him that it is better to be obedient than to serve ritual sacrifices. In the

New Testament, Jesus explicitly states that He came to serve and not to be served. "Leadership

in the redeemed community [church] will be totally unlike leadership in the world."[51]

> Servant leaders seek to make decisions that are also informed by people's thoughts and feelings. Ultimately, leadership is carried out on behalf of people for the glory of God. Christian leaders will seek to emulate Jesus Christ Himself, who came "not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45)[52]

> Leadership involves others, a destination, and change. These characteristics are evident

in the Bible and provide a theological basis for leadership principles. Throughout the Scriptures,

we can see God raising leaders to guide His people toward a set destination that often results in

transformation. These characteristics emphasize that leadership is primarily an influence

process and a crucial element of the *Missio Dei*—mission of God—which is to influence people

to submit to the Lordship of Christ.

> Leadership is a dynamic process over an extended period of time, in various situations in which a leader utilizing leadership resources, and by specific leader behaviors, influences the thoughts and activity of followers, toward the accomplishment of person/task aims, mutually beneficial for leaders, followers and the macro context of which they are a part.[53]

 To illustrate the biblical principles in conjunction with the theories of leadership, we will use

primarily Moses from the Bible as a model leader.

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[51] Douglas Mangum, ed., *Lexham Context Commentary: New Testament*, Lexham Context Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), Mt 20:24-28.

[52] David S. Dockery, "Introduction," in *Christian Leadership Essentials: A Handbook for Managing Christian Organizations*, ed. David S. Dockery. (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011), pp. 5-6.

[53] Moreau, Netland, and Van Engen, *Evangelical*, p. 567.

The narrative of Scriptures tells the story of God's people, the descendants of Abraham,

held captive in the land of Egypt. However, before their captivity in Egypt, God had called and

promised Abraham in Genesis 12:1-2 that his descendants would be a great nation. Therefore,

for the people of God to be held captive was a not in alignment with God's ultimate destination

for their destiny–the Promised Land. This is where the noteworthiness of Moses becomes

obvious as a leader. God called and instructed Moses to lead His people out of captivity. Moses

had a clear objective, and with this in mind, he was prepared to lead them out of bondage.

Involving Others: Moses' Self-Awareness as a Leader

As a leader, Moses knew his strengths and his limitations. He told God he was not

eloquent enough for the leadership task given to him. "But Moses said to the LORD, 'Oh, my

Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am

slow of speech and of tongue'."[54]

Peter Scazzero states, "The first and most difficult task we face as leaders is to lead

ourselves. Why? Because it requires confronting parts of who we are that we prefer to

neglect, forget, or deny."[55] Knowing yourself as a person is vitally important as a leader. As

the story of the Israelites unfolds with being captive in Egypt and brought on a journey of

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[54] Ex 4:10.

[55] Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Leader: How Transforming Your Inner Life Will Deeply Transform Your Church, Team, and the World.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), p. 51.

redemption, we see the leadership skills of Moses being developed. At the onset of the assignment given to Moses, we see a man who is undoubtedly fearful but self-aware.

The declaration from Moses to God that he was not an eloquent speaker was the first of several instances where Moses indirectly and directly invited others into his leadership role. In his admission of lacking eloquence, his brother, Aaron, was introduced to fill the gap of his speech deficiency. To be an effective leader is to involve others, even as the leader leads others. A leader needs to grasp his or her leadership role by learning to recognize his or her weakness and tendencies that could block the leadership potential. "To lead means to have some command of our own anxiety and some capacity not to let other people's anxiety contaminate us; that is, not to allow their anxiety to affect our thinking, actions, and decisions"[56]

Moses' self-awareness helped him to proclaim is lack of eloquence, but in his leadership, he had moments of lapse in self-awareness. Self-awareness can make, break, or even teach leaders. In the leadership journey of Moses, we see examples of how he involved others in various ways and appointed Aaron as his spokesperson.

- The openness of Moses to receiving Jethro's advice: In Exodus 18:13-27, Jethro advises Moses to delegate judging tasks to capable men, forming a hierarchical structure with Moses at the top for the most difficult cases.

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[56] Peter L Steinke, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What.* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), p. xii.

- Moses appointed other leaders: In Numbers 11:16-17 and Deuteronomy 1:13-15, Moses, guided by God, appointed 70 elders to share the burden of leadership and judging alongside him.

- Moses' succession plan: In Numbers 27:18 and Exodus 17:8-13, Moses chooses Joshua as his successor and military commander, leading the Israelites in the battle against the Amalekites.

- Moses' willingness to consult with others: In Exodus 19:7 and Deuteronomy 5:1-3, Moses calls together the elders to receive the commandments given by God and mediate between God and the people. In Numbers 13-14, Moses sends scouts to explore the Promised Land, and the people ultimately voted on whether to proceed based on their report.

- Moses leveraged diverse skills: In Exodus 35:30-35, God specifically selects Bezalel and other skilled artisans to design and build the Tabernacle, showcasing the importance of individual talents in achieving a shared goal.

Moses was a great example of a leader who believed in involving others. The Scriptures indicate that Moses became an effective leader by consistently involving others. In the beginning, Moses tried to lead alone, but his father-in-law advised him not to overburden himself and to delegate tasks to others. Jethro helped Moses understand that delegation was necessary to maintain his strength and effectiveness. Moses understood what his vision and mission were, and his involvement with others was important to fulfilling both.

Involving a Destination: Moses' Leadership Vision

The story of Moses can only be told in its fullness by mentioning the objective and ultimate destination for leading the Israelites. When God heard the cries of the Israelites and remembered His covenant with Abraham, He appeared to Moses in the burning bush and commissioned him to go to Pharaoh and demand the release of the Israelites.[57] After God appeared to Moses in Exodus 3, Moses had a clear definition of his "why" this was vitally important since having a clear end goal or "Promised Land" in any leadership effort. Just like Moses leading the Israelites, knowing the ultimate destination provides direction, purpose, and motivation for everyone involved. The task of Moses was not only to take the Israelites out of Egyptian slavery but to take them to the Promised Land.

The Promised Land is both a physical place—the land of Canaan—and a theological concept. God has promised to bestow blessings on His followers and bring them into a restful place. Faith and faithfulness are conditions of entering the Promised Land.[58]

> FINAL COVENANT CODE PROMISES (OF A GREAT NATION IN A NEW LAND) AND WARNINGS (AGAINST IDOLATRY/POLYTHEISM) (23:31–33)
> Exodus 23:31–32. The traditional borders of the Promised Land are here described, beginning with the "Red Sea" (presumably the Gulf of Aqaba at its extreme Northern shore) on the Southeast; and from there to the "Sea of the Philistines" (the Mediterranean) all along the West; and from the "desert" (the wilderness Negev of Judah, South and Southwest) to the "River" (the Euphrates on the Northeast). The promise to Abraham of this same land in Gen 15:18 uses only the wording "from the river of Egypt to the great River, the Euphrates," thus from the Southwest to the Northeast, including by implication everything in between and the borders intended by

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[57] Ex 3.

[58] (Genesis 17:18, cf 35:12) J. A. McGuire-Moushon, "Promised Land," ed. Douglas Mangum et al., *Lexham Theological Wordbook*, Lexham Bible Reference Series. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), p.549.

the other compass points as well. Deuteronomy 11:24 provides yet another wording, "from the desert to Lebanon, and from the Euphrates River to the Western Sea." These (and others also found in the OT) are all somewhat imprecise generalizations akin to "from Maine to California" or "from Canada to Mexico" as ways of describing the United States. The actual boundaries for Israel are described in final detail only in Josh 11–20, where the division of the land among the tribes takes place. Complete domination of all this territory would await the days of David.[59]

Verse 31 establishes what God was willing to do: give Israel a vast, new land to occupy and purge it of its hostile inhabitants so that the land would be all theirs. It was a special gift not of a barren land that held no previous inhabitants because it was such a difficult place to live but of a fertile land that was occupied and had been farmed for centuries, which Israel could now claim for their own.[60]

The Promised Land was the destination and mission of Moses's leadership. The

Scriptures do not clearly indicate that Moses led people in the past. However, in Exodus 3:1-14,

Scripture tells us that he shepherded Jethro's sheep. This duty of tending to the sheep implies

that he would be responsible and accountable to his father-in-law. His role as a shepherd may

have been instrumental in his ability to lead the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land of

Canaan.

Often, leaders who are influential in mobilizing people to fulfill their purpose or thrive

do so by aligning their mission to their core objective—destination. This mobilization by the

leader is most effectively done using "adaptive" principles. Moses's approach to successfully

leading the Israelites is embodied in 'Adaptive leadership,' which is "the practice of mobilizing

people to tackle tough challenges and thrive."[61] The leadership of Moses was so mission-

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[59] See 1 Kgs 4:21–24 for the description as of the time of Solomon for the land David had placed under Israel's control through the military accomplishments summarized in 2 Sam 5; 7:1; 8:14–15.

[60] Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, Vol. 2, The New American Commentary. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), p. 549.

focused that he had little time to brainstorm and test varying scenarios but only to be

intentionally focused on mobilizing the Israelites. His leadership of the Israelites is similar to

that of many congregations today. Congregational leadership can be challenging but a

rewarding opportunity. Today, the congregation leader is tasked with moving people from one

state of mind to something bigger and aligning them with his or her God-given call.

Every organization will have a mission, whether clearly stated or not in a MS. The

"mission statements are simply short descriptions (or not so short!) of what the organization

does. Few inspire. A good mission statement points to the outcomes (some would say ends)

one should observe as the mission is accomplished."[62] The VS and MS are like compasses for

the leader, and everyone involved in the organization. The mission of Moses was focused

entirely on the destination of Canaan. If Moses was the leader of a church or advocacy group

today, his MS would be something along the lines of: "We aim to rescue the enslaved Israelites

from the control of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own land to fulfill their

God-ordained purpose."[63] Moses and other leaders in the Bible lead with an obligation to meet

a presumed objective or get to a set destination. Moses trusted God with his assignments.

"Perhaps that is the most important thing to remember: God is taking us into uncharted

territory to transform us."[64]

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[61] Ronald A Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Martin Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World.* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2009). Kindle, Loc. 377.

[62] Robert Andringa, "Governance and Board Relations," in *Christian Leadership Essentials: A Handbook for Managing Christian Organizations*, ed. David S. Dockery. (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011), p. 79.

[63] Ex 3:7-10.

[64] Tod E. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2018) p. 217.

Moses, among other leaders of the Bible, shows us that biblical leadership requires having a clear vision and direction, which align with God's purposes and principles. Proverbs 29:18 states, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."[65] Leaders must seek God's will through prayer, study of His Word, and discernment to discern the right destination. They are tasked with leading people toward fulfilling God's calling for their lives, both individually and corporately. The destination involves not only temporal goals but also the ultimate goal of eternal life in Christ.[66] As leaders point others to this eternal hope, they encourage and motivate people to persevere in faith and obedience despite challenges and setbacks.

Involving Change: Moses' Leadership Involved Transformation

Leadership should be transformative for the leader and those being led. As a transformative force, the leader involves and influences others to journey to a destination or organizational objective. The connection between vision, mission, and leadership lies in their transformative power. When a leader articulates a clear vision, outlines the mission, and involves others in the journey, everyone embarks on a path of growth and development, reaching their individual and collective goals.

At its core, transformational leadership revolves around the changes the leaders bring about within themselves and their followers. Few biblical individuals embody this style of leadership as vividly as Moses, the prophet who led the Israelites out of Egyptian enslavement.

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[65] King James Version.

[66] John 3:16.

Moses was not a guide; he spearheaded a monumental shift in both his character and the collective identity of the Israelites.

The vision of Moses went beyond escaping from slavery. It encompassed a dream of establishing a nation where the Israelites could govern themselves and flourish, as was promised to Abraham in Genesis 12 and Exodus 6:4-8. This vision that Moses proclaimed was not ambiguous; it had a focus— freedom and the Promised Land. By presenting this land as their destination, Moses gave the Israelites a specific goal to strive for among the uncertainties they faced during their journey.

Every transformative leader identifies obstacles impacting the mission and develops strategies to overcome them. For Moses, his primary challenge was breaking free from the oppression of the Pharaoh. The Israelites were fearful of the actions Moses would need to take to accomplish his vision. It cannot be overlooked that the Israelites were terrified of Pharaoh and hesitant to leave their known lives behind. Moses addressed their fears, reminding them of the power and purpose of God for them.[67] He empowered them to embrace change and trust in God's plan.

The journey of Moses as a leader was marked by growth. He began as someone grappling with self-doubt. He was transformed into an inspiring figure. The path to freedom and the Promised Land was filled with challenges—doubts, disagreements, and difficult choices. Yet it was in these moments of adversity that his leadership truly shone. Every time Moses met Pharoah, there were setbacks, rejections, and disagreements, but Moses remained resilient despite these hindrances.

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[67] Ex 14:13-14; Num 14:13-14.

Moses's transformational leadership is defined by his clear vision of freedom and going to the Promised Land, his ability to inspire and empower others, his resilience in facing challenges, and his lasting impact on the Israelites. By drawing from God's guidance and connecting his vision with the people's hopes and aspirations, Moses led them not just out of Egypt but toward a future of self-determination and fulfillment.

More Than Moses:

A New Testament Exploration of Leadership for Vision and Mission

To restate, leadership should be transformative for the leader and those being led. As a transformative force, the leader involves and influences others to journey to a destination or organizational objective. An example of this transformative leadership is Jesus. He had the "ability to create vision, shape values, and empower change as transforming leadership and Christian leaders in any arena of influence must allow Jesus to lead through them."[68]

Leadership styles often are not static but alternate between tactical and strategic. Tactical leadership at a high level is more concerned with short-term decisions that often require the least effort for the highest return. The strategic approach of leadership is more focused on the leader's ability to cast a vision and organize available resources to accomplish the objectives set forward over some time. Transformational leadership can be seen as both ends of the strategic and tactical leadership styles. At its core, transformational leadership seeks to change those being led and the environment to shape the organization's future

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[68] K. M. Lattea, "Leadership," ed. David G. Benner and Peter C. Hill, *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology & Counseling*, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 675.

success or effort being led. Another term used for transformational leadership is adaptive leadership which "is an approach to making progress on the most important challenges you face in your piece and part of the world, presumably in your professional life but perhaps in your personal life as well."[69]

The Bible does not classify leaders as tactical, strategic, or transformational. Nonetheless, the biblical narrative of leaders both in the New and Old Testament exemplified the abovementioned leadership styles. Abraham, Moses, King David, and Nehemiah are among some of the leaders in the Old Testament who demonstrated what transformational leadership looks like. In the New Testament, Jesus taught the people and showed how a leader can bring about notable changes in people. Jesus recruited his disciples and communicated his purpose and their role in him fulfilling his purpose.

> and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."[70]

Commission, Promise and Ascension of Jesus

Luke 24:36–53

Though Luke is concluding his Gospel, the real story is just beginning. Ahead is the disciples' empowerment through the bestowal of the Spirit so they can carry out their call on

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[69] Ronald A Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Martin Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2009). Kindle, Loc. 228

[70] Luke 24:46-49.

behalf of God. Beyond that is the mission to proclaim to the world what they have experienced

and understood. Jesus had ministered to them to prepare them for this time. Now, it is nearly

time to go. Training camp is just about over; a long season of ministry lies ahead.[71]

Transformational leadership requires the leader to inspire trust in their followers. Jesus

could communicate to His disciples how His purpose would be fulfilled. The transformational

leader will always be confident in providing the necessary motivation and mission clarity to

realize their vision. Jesus, in Matthew 16:21, explained to His disciples how the vision toward

salvation would be accomplished. "From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he

must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and

be killed, and on the third day be raised".

Matthew 16:21

At this crucial point in Matthew's narrative (cf. the same phrase "from then on" in 4:17),

Jesus makes His death and resurrection explicit. "It was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem.…

He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead." Jesus predicted

that He would be killed but raised up later[72]. Up to this point, this has only been implied.[73] His

suffering, death, and resurrection, are "necessary" in the plan of God and will fulfill Scripture.[74]

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[71] Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), Lk 24:36–53.

[72] cf. 17:9, 22–23; 20:17–19, 28; 26:2, 12, 20–32.

[73] 1:21; 10:38; 12:14, 40; 16:4.

[74] 17:10; 24:6; 26:54; cf. Luke 24:26–27. David Turner and Darrell L. Bock, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, Vol 11: Matthew and Mark* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2005), 223.

The example of Jesus of being a transformational leader, along with some principles, can also be seen in how Moses, centuries before, led the Israelites. Therefore, it is essential to note that biblical leadership recognizes the reality of a fallen world and the need for transformation. As stewards of God's creation, leaders are called to bring positive change in the lives of individuals and communities. The Bible encourages believers to renew their minds and be transformed by God's truth[75]. Leaders should exemplify personal growth and inspire others to embrace change and growth. In leading change, biblical leaders must rely on God's wisdom and guidance, trusting His sovereign plan.[76] God's redemptive plan for humanity, culminating in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is the ultimate example of transformative change.

Taking all this aforementioned information into account, biblical leadership requires involving others, initiating change, and having a clear destination because these aspects are deeply rooted in the teachings and examples found in the Bible. Biblical leaders can guide and nurture a community of believers toward a shared destination in Christ by embracing servant leadership, promoting positive change, and pursuing God's purposes. These aspects are essential for effective biblical leadership and can be used to support a leader's effort to clarify the VS and MS of a church. A leader who understands and applies these theological aspects of biblical leadership can effectively clarify a church's vision and mission statement in several ways that will be examined in the next section.

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[75] Rom 12:2.

[76] Prov 3:5-6.

Impact on Clarifying the Vision and Mission Statement of a Church

The following describes how these characteristics have an impact on clarifying the VS and the MS of a church.

- Involving Others: When clarifying the vision and mission of a church, biblical leaders recognize the importance of involving the entire congregation. They value the insight of each member as well as their gifts, and perspectives, creating a shared vision that resonates with everyone. This inclusivity fosters a stronger sense of ownership and commitment among the congregation, leading to greater unity and cooperation in fulfilling the mission.

- Involving Change: Crafting a VS and a MS requires leaders to challenge the *status quo* and envision a future that reflects the calling of God for the church. They must inspire their followers to embrace change and let go of habits or practices hindering the pursuit of the vision. Emphasizing the transformative power of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit can help the congregation understand that change is a natural part of their spiritual journey.

- Involving a Destination: Biblical leaders play a vital role in discerning and articulating God's destination for the church. They seek divine guidance through prayer, meditation on Scripture, and seeking the counsel of wise believers. By clearly communicating the church's destination, leaders can rally the congregation around a common purpose, motivating them to align their efforts and resources with God's mission.

To restate the importance of having clarity on the VS and MS within a church, we have drawn parallels to the journey of Moses with the Israelites. This comparison highlights how these statements serve as guidelines for guiding and uniting a community of believers. The vision is an aspirational future state like the Promised Land for the Israelites. It captures the overarching aspirations of the church, painting a picture of its desired future and expressing the impact it aims to make. This vision, which represents why the church undertakes its activities, must work hand in hand with the mission. The mission serves as a roadmap that outlines how to reach that vision. It translates the aspirations into strategies by specifying the specific initiatives and approaches of the church. It provides the "how" that bridges the gap between aspiration and realization.

Biblical leadership puts emphasis on the significance of clarity and alignment as essential qualities for the success of the congregation. A well-written and effectively communicated VS and MS play a crucial role in encouraging unity by acting as a rallying cry that unites diverse members toward a common goal. This sense of common responsibility encourages a feeling of community, inspiring and motivating each person to contribute their abilities towards the goal.

The leadership style exhibited by Moses in guiding the Israelites offers valuable insights for church leaders. His approach can be exemplified by church leaders who embody leadership principles by involving their congregation in transformative experiences. They embrace change and innovation while navigating challenges with resilience, adapting strategies and approaches to stay aligned with their visions. At the heart of their leadership lies a clear and compelling

destination—the Promised Land for the Israelites, or a vision of impact for the church, embodied in its VS and MS.

The relevance of having a clear VA and MS extends beyond just within the walls of the church. These statements play a role for the congregation, guiding them on their journey and encouraging meaningful involvement. They also help the church extend its reach into the community, guiding its outreach efforts and making a transformative impact. These statements must align with God's purposes, just as Moses remained steadfast in his commitment to God's call. In a nutshell, creating and communicating a VS and MS is crucial for effective leadership in a church based on biblical principles, providing clear guidance for decision-making and goal setting.

Conclusion

The vision is an aspirational future state like the Promised Land for the Israelites. It captures the overarching aspirations of the church, painting a picture of its desired future and expressing the impact it aims to make. This vision, which represents why the church undertakes its activities, must work hand in hand with the mission. The mission serves as a roadmap that outlines how to reach that vision. It translates the aspirations into strategies by specifying the specific initiatives and approaches of the church. It provides the "how" that bridges the gap between aspiration and realization.

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Jesus and Moses, in the Bible, offer valuable lessons for new pastors leading established churches. Moses exemplifies clarifying vision. He discerned God's call to liberate Israel[77] and set a clear mission of freedom. Jesus, receiving the mantle from his Father,[78] focused his mission on fulfilling Scripture and establishing the Kingdom of God. New pastors can learn from this by actively seeking God's direction for the church's future, building on its existing foundation while keeping the core mission central. By clearly articulating this vision and mission, they can unite the congregation and guide practical applications like ministry programs and outreach efforts.

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[77] Ex. 3.

[78] Mat 3:16-17.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review aims to enhance the discourse surrounding the central theme of this thesis-project, which explores the significance of refining and clarifying the vision and mission of a church when a new pastor assumes leadership. It is imperative to note that the author of this thesis-project does not claim to possess an all-inclusive answer to this crucial subject. Instead, the objective is to contribute to the existing body of knowledge from various scholars and leadership experts, emphasizing established documentation related to leadership principles and clarifying the objectives, vision, and mission of the organization.

Vision Discovery and Implementation

George Barna is a renowned researcher, author, and cultural analyst who has significantly impacted the church in America through his insightful studies and thought-provoking writings. He founded the Barna Group, a research and communications firm that provides data-driven insights into Americans' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, particularly about faith and culture.[1]

The contributions of Barna to studying religion and culture have profoundly impacted the church in America. His work has raised awareness of critical trends, empowered churches for effective ministry, promoted faith dialogue and inspired personal renewal. As the church

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[1] "George Barna," George Barna, www.georgebarna.com (Accessed November 10, 2023).

continues to navigate an ever-changing landscape, Barna's insights remain valuable and

relevant, as is seen in his book *The Power of Vision: Discover and Apply God's Plan for Your Life

and Ministry*.

Barna examines how vision clarity is given power when the leader submits to God's

vision. His premise in this work is hinged on the thought that "it is imperative that we grasp His

vision for each church that He has called into existence and that we fervently pursue that vision

as a necessary addition to the building of God's eternal kingdom according to His perfect

purposes."[2] In Christian literature, this book stands as a beacon, informing on the path towards

a life guided by divine purpose. Barna masterfully weaves together insightful theological

concepts with practical strategies, empowering readers to uncover and implement the vision of

God for their lives.

Central to his work is the notion that vision is not merely a fleeting dream or aspiration

but a tangible and compelling blueprint of God's intentions for everyone.

> Those who persevere and arrive at an understanding of the vision from God, and then
> devote themselves to implementing it, experience outcomes they never could have
> foreseen without God's vision as the heartbeat of their ministry. God's vision is beyond
> our comprehension and certainly beyond our grasp; it is only through His empowerment
> that we see and accomplish the vision.[3]

He emphasizes the transformative power of vision, asserting its ability to motivate, inspire, and

provide direction for personal and ministerial endeavors.

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[2] George Barna, *The Power of Vision: How You Can Capture and Apply God's Vision for Your Ministry.*
(Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1992), p. 12.

[3] Barna, *The Power*, p. 13.

Barna further defines vision as "a more staid, but hopefully a more precise, definition. Vision for ministry is a clear mental image of a preferable future imparted by God to His chosen servants and is based upon an accurate understanding of God, self, and circumstances."[4] This definition encapsulates some key aspects of vision:

- Divine Origin: Vision is rooted in God's plan and purpose for our lives. It is not a self-created construct but a gift from God, revealing His intentions for us.

- Foresight: Vision is not about dwelling on the past or being complacent in the present. It calls us to look towards the future, to imagine what God desires to accomplish through us.

- Direction and Meaning: Vision provides a clear sense of direction, guiding our decisions and actions. It instills a sense of purpose and meaning, aligning our lives with God's overarching plan.

According to Barna, vision is clear; vision is preferable to the current state. Vision concentrates on the future; vision is from God. Vision is a gift to leaders tailored to their circumstances, and vision reflects a realistic perspective. Vision is dreaming the most possible dream; vision is built on reality and a visionary pastor is a successful pastor. [5] "Vision for ministry is a reflection of what God wants to accomplish through you to build His kingdom."[6]

While Barna goes to great lengths to define and illustrate the importance of vision, he also sought to distinguish between vision and mission. Barna makes a clear distinction between

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[4] Barna, *The Power*, p. 13.

[5] Barna, *The Power,* p. 25.

[6] Barna, *The Power*, p. 27.

vision and mission. While vision captures God's overarching purpose for our lives, mission defines the specific steps and strategies we take to fulfill that vision. Vision provides the "why" behind our actions, while mission outlines the "how." "The mission statement is a definition of the key ministry objectives of the church. The vision statement is a clarification of the specific direction and activities the church will pursue toward making a true ministry impact."[7] Moreover, "while the mission statement is philosophic in nature, the vision statement is strategic in character."[8]

Barna provides valuable insights into the importance of vision and highlights the value of developing a VS. He emphasizes the importance of developing a VS to articulate the vision effectively. Barna theorizes that "growth is more likely to occur in churches where there is clear, substantive, productive communication taking place on a regular basis. Vision must be owned. Vision must be spelled out for everyone associated with it. Vision statements are critical; they must be focused and concise."[9]

Barna's expertise as a researcher has given him insights into patterns in successful organizations and communication is typically a factor in success or failure. "Simply put, the organizations that have efficient, clear, reliable means of communication tend to be successful; those whose lines of communication are underdeveloped, imprecise or otherwise restricted are more likely to experience stagnation or decline."[10]

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[7] Barna, *The Power*, p. 25.

[8] Barna, *The Power*, p. 38.

[9] Barna, *The Power*, p.123.

[10] Barna, *The Power*, p. 124.

> Articulating the vision is one of the most important types of communication. Having a true vision is of little value unless it can be communicated with clarity and consistency. As you work through the vision-making process, realize that once you have captured God's vision for your ministry, you must develop it for two audiences: yourself and those people with whom you will be ministering. While the vision itself will remain the same, the depth and manner with which you describe it will be different in each of those cases.[11]

George Barna's emphasis on communicating vision is a key takeaway from his book. Effective communication of vision is not a mere formality but a powerful tool for aligning individuals, motivating action, and achieving organizational success. By embracing the importance of clear and consistent communication, organizations can harness the transformative power of vision to fulfill their mission and make a lasting impact. Another key takeaway from *The Power of Vision* underpins the emphasis on effective communication and clarification of the vision. "Vision is the centerpiece of strategy; strategy is the means to effective church development; effective development of the church is the means to transforming the world with His love. Be sure that when strategic decisions and plans are being conceived, the vision is the heart of the discussion."[12]

The Power of Vision presents a compelling and insightful exploration of the concept of vision and its role in shaping our personal and ministerial endeavors. While the book provides valuable guidance and practical strategies for uncovering and implementing God's vision, it also contains a few notable weaknesses that warrant critical evaluation.

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[11] Barna, *The Power*, p. 124.

[12] Barna, *The Power*, p. 127.

Firstly, there is insufficient attention to cultural diversity and context. While Barna's insights on vision are relevant to a global audience, the book could delve deeper into the impact of cultural diversity and context on vision discovery and implementation. For example, congregants may not feel empowered to participate in vision discovery in hierarchical cultures. Addressing the nuances of applying vision in different cultural settings would enhance the applicability and relevance of the book to a wider range of readers. In contrast, Nicaraguan American writer Juana Bordas, in her book *The Power of Latino Leadership,* offers valuable insights and inspiration that can be applied to crafting VS and MS, especially for organizations or initiatives focused on Latino communities or values. Likewise, while Paul Tokunaga, in his book *Invitation to Lead: Guidance for Emerging Asian American Leaders,* does not explicitly deal with crafting VS and MS, he provides several elements that can inform and inspire their development, particularly for Asian American leaders and organizations.

Barna could address this weakness by incorporating perspectives from individuals and organizations from diverse cultural backgrounds, exploring how vision is established differently in different cultures, and providing guidance on adapting vision strategies to specific cultural contexts. This would ensure that the insights of the book are universally applicable and sensitive to the unique challenges and opportunities individuals, leaders, and organizations face in various cultural settings.

Vision and Mission Clarity

Like Kevin Ford did, in his book *Transforming Church*, Barna could have provided more specific and actionable strategies for overcoming common challenges leaders and organizations

face when pursuing their vision. Offering practical guidance on navigating obstacles, managing

setbacks, and maintaining resilience would empower readers to implement their visions

effectively. Barna could address this weakness by dedicating a section or chapter to specific

challenges, such as overcoming resistance to change, fostering collaboration, and maintaining

motivation in the face of obstacles. In each case, he could provide practical strategies, tools,

and resources that individuals and organizations can use to navigate these challenges and

maintain their commitment to their visions.

Ford speaks directly to the challenges that can impact the efforts of the leader to

implement his or her vision. He states that "leading change in a change–resistant subculture is a

tough gig. It is made even tougher by the fact that most pastors, by their own admission, lack

change-leadership skills."[13] Ford suggests some practical approaches in what he calls

"movements" as valuable insights into navigating resistance to change within the context of

churches. In a nutshell, Ford's five movements provide a framework for addressing resistance to

change by asking the leader to[14]:

- Shift the focus from internal structures to outward mission and service.

- Empower individuals and build community instead of relying on top-down
  leadership.

- Prioritize relationships, growth, and shared decision-making.

- Cultivate a spirit of sacrifice and commitment to the greater good.

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[13] Kevin Graham Ford, *Transforming Church: Bringing out the Good to Get to Great* (Carol Stream, IL: Salt River, 2007), p. 30.

[14] Ford, *Transforming*, p. 34.

- Engage in constructive conflict and address challenging issues with courage and compassion.

By understanding these connections, Ford's movements can inform the analysis of the leader regarding the resistance to change. These practical principles to address resistance to change are missing from Barna's work. A leader attempting to implement their vision will inherently change the organization. "Change is hard because change creates pain." But healthy churches, transforming churches can manage to embrace changes while learning to navigate changes. [15] Both Barna and Ford agree that there will be a change when the leader implements their vision, but Ford provides a practical guide on how to navigate organizational changes.

Turning Vision into Action:

The Vital Role of Mature Leadership in Church Mission

The church is a dynamic institution constantly evolving to reflect the changing times and cultures in which it operates. As such, leadership in the church is essential to ensuring that the church remains relevant and effective. This thesis-project focuses on the role of leadership in shaping the culture of the church and how leaders can effectively discern their context and clarify how the vision and mission of the church will remain relevant. In other words, the church is not isolated from the world around it. It is constantly being influenced by the cultures and societies in which it exists. This means that the church must constantly adapt and change to remain relevant. Leaders play a crucial role in this process, as they are responsible for setting the vision and direction of the church.

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[15] Ford, *Transforming*, p. 45.

To be effective leaders, church leaders must understand the cultural context in which their church exists. They must also be able to communicate the vision and mission of the church in a way that is relevant to that context. This requires careful discernment and a deep understanding of both the church and the world around it. Leadership ensures the church remains relevant and effective in a changing world. Church leaders must be able to understand the cultural context in which their church exists, and they must be able to communicate the vision and mission of the church in a relevant way.

The effectiveness of the vision and mission of the organization is closely correlated to the character and maturity of the leader. The book *The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership Development,* written by J. Robert Clinton, speaks to the vision and mission in leadership. However, Clinton takes an unconventional approach to the conversation of leadership. His approach is to look at leadership as a progression. The development of the leader will be fundamental to his or her growth in effectively casting and communicating vision.

In addressing leadership development, Clinton theorizes that the character of the leader will be the basis for their effectiveness as a mature leader.

> Because character development has many facets, there are a variety of integrity checks. This is a sampling of the many that I have identified: values (which determine convictions), temptation (which tests conviction), conflict against ministry vision (which tests faith), an alternative in guidance situations (which tests calling), persecution (which tests steadfastness), loyalty (which tests allegiance), and restitution (which tests honesty).[16]

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[16] J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership Development*. (Carol Stream, IL: Navpress, 2012). Kindle, Loc. 1253.

Based on Clinton's perspective, the maturity of the leader is shaped by "a dynamic process in which a man or woman with God-given capacity influences a specific group of God's people toward His purposes for the group."[17] This definition of leadership is centered on the fact that leaders are made. Clinton challenges the notion that leaders are born by doubling down to say and theorizes that, with the right techniques, leaders can be made. Clinton relies profoundly on the biblical framework of identifying potential leaders and grooming them into godly and effective leaders for the context called to function.

> It is always true that God gives leadership to His church and His kingdom: "Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God . . . putteth down one, and setteth up another," said the psalmist (Psalm 75:6-7, KJV). But it is also true that there are processes that God uses to produce His leaders. A study of Scripture shows the stages of development in a Moses, a David, or a Paul.[18]

In his definition of a leader, as stated above, Clinton speaks fundamentally to the a priori nature of a leader being God-ordained and gifted. Leadership is dynamic and situational and not predicated on a title. "This is contrary to the popular notion that a leader must have a formal position, a formal title, or formal training. Many who are called to lead in church or parachurch organizations may not have formal titles such as pastor or director."[19] According to Clinton, leadership is dynamic, though the context of the church or group may vary. God calls leaders, and they should be intentional in their development. "Leaders are shaped by deliberate training and by experience."[20]

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[17] Clinton, The *Making*, p. 15.

[18] Clinton, *The Making*, p. 7.

[19] Clinton, *The Making*, p. 9.

[20] Clinton, *The Making*, p. 10.

The benefits of deliberate leadership training and character development is crucial for the execution of the organization's vision and mission. To underscore this view of the significance of leadership character development and its correlation with an organization's vision execution, Clinton references the "conflict against ministry vision"[21] Clinton describes the challenges that leaders face when they are trying to implement their vision amid opposition. This opposition can come from various sources, including internal conflict within the organization, external opposition voices, or simply the challenges of everyday life.

Clinton argues that conflict is inevitable for leaders but can also trigger growth and development. When leaders can navigate conflict successfully, they emerge stronger and more resilient. They also learn valuable lessons about themselves and their teams. He mentions a specific example of how conflict can arise in the context of ministry vision in "differences of opinion and vision concerning the format of services, children's ministries, small group structure and leadership, and the pastor's working hours."[22] The leaders will face resistance between their vision and the reality of the situation. The writer argues that the key to successfully navigating this conflict is to stay focused on the vision and be flexible and willing to adjust as needed.

"Leadership backlash tests a leader's perseverance, clarity of vision, and faith."[23] Nevertheless, these moments of backlash—people disagreeing strongly with the leader's ideas for the future—will undoubtedly test the resilience and maturity of the leader and, more

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[21] Clinton, *The Making*, p. 51.

[22] Clinton, *The Making*, p. 85.

[23] Clinton, *The Making*, p. 94.

importantly, their submission to God. "Leaders are people with God-given vision, and one of their essential functions is to inspire followers with that vision and hope. They can't fulfill this function without faith."[24] As a result, Clinton reminds the reader that "God uses His Word in a variety of ways: to give inner conviction, to assign ministry, to solve problems, to motivate toward vision, to encourage faith, to give divine assurance, and to clarify guidance."[25]

Comparative Analysis of Tod Bolsinger and Robert Clinton:

Expectations of Leadership

Leadership is a complex and multifaceted concept, and its definition, expectations, and principles have been the subject of much debate and discussion. In his book, *The Making of a Leader*, Clinton emphasizes the importance of leader development. Nonetheless, in his book *Canoeing the Mountains: Leading into Uncharted Territory*, Tod Bolsinger takes a different approach.

Bolsinger focuses on the expectations of the leader and how they can guide those they lead in navigating unfamiliar spaces. He argues that "leadership is about an organization fulfilling its mission and realizing its reason for being."[26] He also states that "leadership is always about personal and corporate transformation,"[27] and he is particularly interested in theorizing how leaders can achieve this transformation, even in uncharted territories. His

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[24] Clinton, *The Making*, p. 101.

[25] Clinton, *The Making*, p. 61.

[26] Tod E. Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory.* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2018), p. 19.

[27] Bolsinger, *Canoeing,* p. 21.

definition of leadership and perspective on leadership, especially in the church context, is

similar to that of Clinton. They both emphasize that leadership should bring and influence

changes. However, according to Bolsinger, leadership is expressed in behavior; leaders act and

function. Bolsinger underscores the transformative nature of leadership by contrasting critical

differences between management and leadership. "Management cares for what is. Leadership

is focused on what can be or what must be. Management is about keeping promises to a

constituency."[28] Similar to Clinton, Bolsinger emphasizes that leadership is not just essential,

but leadership is developed.

Clinton emphasizes the personal development and maturity of the leader to effectively

lead a group of people toward their God-given purpose. Bolsinger does not challenge or

question the need for maturity of the leader. What is more, Bolsinger takes the approach of

identifying and understanding the changing context of the leader, especially in churches and

other non-profits, to develop the leader. Tod Bolsinger appropriately states, "Leadership

requires shared, corporate learning expressed in new shared, corporate functioning. In order to

act or function differently in a changing world, all true leadership will require transformation.

To that end, all true leadership will be anchored in the principles of adaptive leadership."[29]

Bolsinger references the concept of adaptive leadership, which involves the ability to

navigate and respond effectively to complex and dynamic challenges. Writing *Canoeing the*

Mountains as a guiding framework, he directs present and future leaders toward understanding

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[28] Bolsinger, *Canoeing,* p. 19.

[29] Bolsinger, *Canoeing*, p. 40.

the cultural shifts characteristic of the 21st century. He emphasizes the importance of context, particularly within a post-Christian world since "In the Christendom world, speaking was leading. In a post-Christendom world, leading is multidimensional: apostolic, relational, and adaptive."[30]

The changes the church faces in this post-Christendom era are uncharted territory. Tod Bolsinger explains that understanding uncharted territory means recognizing that the world before us is nothing like the world behind us. It is interesting to note—according to Bolsinger—that even more than the uncharted territory around us is the capacity for leadership within us. We know the church does not work as it used to, and many of us are alarmed at the declining numbers we are experiencing, and the declining influence churches have on the culture.

Bolsinger provides practical approaches to open a much-required discussion amongst church leaders. The reader might observe that this book lacks straightforward answers but demands a mindset change. The author raises thought-provoking questions and proposals or what he calls "reorientation." He argues that "today's leaders are facing complex challenges that have no clear-cut solutions. These challenges are more systemic in nature and require broad, widespread learning."[31] Bolsinger offers instruction to help church leaders begin the painful process of adaptation so that the message of Jesus might not simply survive but thrive in a future fundamentally different from the past. Principally, the writer speaks to the importance of leadership through unfamiliar scenarios. He uses the famous historical narrative

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[30] Bolsinger, *Canoeing*, p. 37.

[31] Bolsinger, *Canoeing*, p. 18.

of the expedition of Lewis and Clark that required them to row up the Mississippi and Missouri

Rivers to explore uncharted lands west of the Mississippi River. "Lewis and Clark and the Corps

of Discovery were about to go off the map and into uncharted territory. They would have to

change plans, give up expectations, even reframe their entire mission."[32] This reference to

going off the map requires mature leadership that can be trusted.

Be that as it may, Clinton speaks to the convergence phase of the maturity of the

leaders that sees them maximizing their influence to accomplish the mission of the

organization. At times, accomplishing the mission of the organization will require going into

uncharted territories. The development of the leader usually occurs on the map or in a context

that is the status quo. Still, to lead effectively in a changing context, for example, in post-

Christendom, their leadership is maximized in uncharted territories. Tod Bolsinger summarizes

the five vital lessons that make up the structure of his book:

1. The world in front of you is nothing like the world behind you.

2. No one will follow you off the map unless they trust you on the map.

3. In uncharted territory, adaptation is everything.

4. You cannot go alone but have not succeeded until you have survived the

   sabotage.

5. Everybody will be changed (especially the leader).

By using the explorations of Lewis and Clark, Bolsinger effectively compares adaptability

and team effort to what needs to be done to reinvigorate and lead the church. He repeatedly

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[32] Bolsinger, *Canoeing*, p. 27.

highlights that leadership that dares to be different must undoubtedly venture into uncharted

territories. As a result, he noted that,

> Leadership for uncharted territory is a shared, corporate (see the Latin root word for "body," corps, in corporate) learning process that enables the community to thrive and fulfill its mission in a new context, when the outside environment changes. Our task is leading the learning so our churches will adapt and thrive as a local expression of the larger system that is the body of Christ in the world.[33]

Bolsinger provides a practical perspective on leadership, examining the leader, mission,

and development as they learn to recognize their personal and corporate limitations and

strengths. Similarly, Clinton emphasizes personal and character development for leaders.

Character is crucial to God and the foundation of the leadership development process. God

works on the character of the individuals before shaping their actions and leadership abilities.

Clinton suggests that the maturity of a leader reaches its peak when God integrates

their life experiences, gifts, and purpose to shape them as a leader. In most cases, the

organization or team requiring leadership has its complexities. Therefore, the author believes

that a leader must first understand the organization as a living system before attempting to

lead any organization or team. Organizational systems—including churches—rely heavily on

feedback loops and the ability to adapt to change. An effective leader must navigate these

complexities and guide the organization toward its goals. Tod Bolsinger remarks,

> The composition and interaction of the people, resources, interconnections and purpose of a group…[Therefore] To understand that we need to do a bit more unpacking of this key concept: Because the church is the body of Christ, in order to lead it, a leader must be able to see and lead the church as a living system."[34]

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[33] Bolsinger, *Canoeing*, p. 101.

[34] Bolsinger, *Canoeing*, p. 102.

His argument on the church being a living system directly references adaptive leadership concepts taught by Ronald A. Heifetz, Marty Linsky, and Alexander Grashow. The idea of the leader viewing the organization as a system is a fundamental concept by these three authors, in their book *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World.* They suggest that the leader is also a system and "as complex as the one [they] are trying to move forward. To understand [their] personal system, [they] have to take stock of many different things: [their] personality, life experiences, cognitive and other skills, and emotional makeup."[35] The approach of Heifetz, Linksy, and Grashow to leadership is in lockstep with Bolsinger because the ability of the leader to lead change requires self-awareness and clarity of the context of the organization they are leading.

A Closer Look at Adaptive Leadership

Leadership literature offers diverse perspectives on navigating the complexities of organizational dynamics. Two noteworthy works are *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* by Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky in relationship with *Canoeing the Mountains* by Bolsinger. Both books contribute valuable insights as we undertake a comparative analysis, exploring the commonalities and distinctions between these influential texts.

A central theme of both books is the examination of leadership dynamics, emphasizing adaptive leadership. Both texts recognize the essentiality for leaders to navigate uncertainty and skillfully guide organizations through transformative change. Moreover, practical

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[35] Ronald A. Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Martin Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*. (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2009), p. 160.

applications are a key feature of both books, as they offer tangible tools and tactics to link the gap between theoretical concepts and practical action-driven strategies.

Although these books share some common ideas, they differ in how they are written, what they focus on, and who they are for. *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* primarily takes a broad approach, offering insights applicable to diverse organizational contexts and sectors. It emphasizes systemic change and addresses leadership challenges in a generic organizational setting. The book adopts an academic and instructional tone, providing frameworks and tools for a wide leadership audience across different sectors, including business, non-profits, and government. This could be due to the book being published by Harvard Kennedy School.

In contrast, *Canoeing the Mountains* narrows its focus to Christian leadership in unfamiliar spaces. It connects leadership principles with Christian perspectives and draws insights from historical and biblical contexts. The narrative style of this work stands out through its use of storytelling and figurative language, drawing parallels between the challenges faced by leaders and the metaphor of canoeing in unfamiliar terrains.

Furthermore, the intended audiences of these books differ significantly. *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* is designed for a broad leadership audience, irrespective of religious affiliations. Its secular approach provides generally applicable principles for leadership experts. On the other hand, *Canoeing the Mountains* is tailored for a Christian leadership audience, particularly those seeking to incorporate faith-based perspectives into their leadership approach. The book emphasizes Christian ethical principles and values, offering a distinctive perspective on leadership within a faith context.

A closer look at *Canoeing the Mountains* directly references adaptive leadership concepts taught by Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow. However, Bolsinger is trying to popularize Heifetz for the church as Heifetz is not aimed at a church audience. The idea of the leader viewing the organization as a living system is a fundamental concept employed by the writers. Bolsinger suggests that the leader is also a system and "as complex as the one [they] are trying to move forward. To understand [their] personal system, [they] have to take stock of many different things: [their] personality, life experiences, cognitive and other skills, and emotional makeup."[36]

In reviewing Bolsinger's work, it is observed that viewing an organization as a living system is crucial because it aligns with the principles of adaptive leadership. Seeing an organization this way acknowledges its dynamic, interconnected, and evolving nature, like that of a living organism. "The adaptive process is both conservative and progressive in that it enables the living system to take the best from its traditions, identity, and history into the future."[37] In essence, the living system perspective aligns with the adaptive leadership framework by emphasizing the need for leaders to navigate the complexities of organizations with a keen awareness of their dynamic, evolving nature. This mindset is instrumental in fostering effective leadership in uncertainty and change.

Heifetz, Linksy, and Grashow are intentional about practical lessons on leadership. *The Practice of Adaptive* acts as a field guide concentrated on the helpful application of leadership

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[36] Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky, *The Practice*, p. 160.

[37] Heifetz, Linksy and Grashow, *The Practice,* Kindle, Loc. 5047.

principles instead of a theoretical framework. The lessons are relevant for all types of leaders today. Adaptive leadership, as described by this team of writers, is "an approach to making progress on the most important challenges you face in your piece and part of the world, presumably in your professional life but perhaps in your personal life as well."[38]

In the other hand, Bolsinger emphasizes that the context of the leader may require him or her to go beyond the established status quo to lead change. Since Bolsinger used Heifetz, Linksy, and Grashow as a reference to point on the concept of adaptive leadership, it must be stated that the critical presumption by Heifetz, Linksy and Grashow advises that all leaders will be challenged in accomplishing the objectives of their organization. The authors state, "To lead effectively, you also have to examine and take action toward yourself in the context of the challenge."[39] Fundamentally, "Adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive."[40]

In view of that, adaptive leadership is about thriving and not just being faithful but being intentional about the growth of the organization. "Adaptive leadership is specifically about change that enables the capacity to thrive."[41] The reality of adaptive leadership is that adaptation takes time, and in a lot of cases, the leaders think that there is not enough time, and they settle for technical and tactical changes.

> The most common cause of failure in leadership is produced by treating adaptive challenges as if they were technical problems. What's the difference? While technical

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[38] Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky, *The Practice*, p. 14.

[39] Heifetz, Linksy and Grashow, *The Practice,* Kindle, Loc. 260.

[40] Heifetz, Linksy and Grashow, *The Practice,* Kindle, Loc. 377.

[41] Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky, *The Practice*, p. 23.

problems may be very complex and critically important (like replacing a faulty heart valve during cardiac surgery), they have known solutions that can be implemented by current know-how. They can be resolved through the application of authoritative expertise and through the organization's current structures, procedures, and ways of doing things. Adaptive challenges can only be addressed through changes in people's priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties. Making progress requires going beyond any authoritative expertise to mobilize discovery, shedding certain entrenched ways, tolerating losses, and generating the new capacity to thrive anew.[42]

Heifetz, Linksy, and Grashow infer that an important question needs to be answered by the leader: What type of change is being attempted, long-term or short-term? Short-term or technical changes can impact the organization, but long-term or adaptive changes will create a cultural shift. "Adaptive leadership requires persistence. Significant change is the product of incremental experiments that build up over time. And cultures change slowly. Those who practice this form of leadership need to stay in the game, even while taking the heat along the way."[43]

Heifetz, Linksy, and Grashow denote the need for openness from leadership to foster adaptive changes. A key element of personal and organizational awareness is further emphasized in the need to listen. "In leading adaptive change, you ask people to open their hearts to you and the purposes that you believe you share with them. Demonstrate the same openness to them and their sense of purpose."[44] Tod Bolsinger also addresses the theme of listening. "Leaders must be able to withhold interpretations and interventions long enough to

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[42] Heifetz, Linksy and Grashow, *The Practice*, p. 32.

[43] Heifetz, Linksy and Grashow, *The Practice,* Kindle, Loc. 424.

[44] Bolsinger, *Canoeing*, Kindle, Loc. 4442.

be listeners who also have the vision to see the deeper systemic realities at work in the organization."[45]

Heifetz, Linksy, and Grashow present a compelling framework for comprehending and implementing adaptive leadership principles. Although the book imparts valuable perspectives and practical approaches, it also encompasses a few noteworthy shortcomings deserving of scrutiny. Despite its practical focus, the book can be perceived as overly theoretical and abstract, potentially challenging readers to connect the concepts to real-world scenarios. The authors have extensive experience and careers in academia, which may be the reason for the extensive use of academic language and frameworks in this book that could make it less accessible to those seeking a more hands-on and pragmatic guide to adaptive leadership.

Heifetz, Linksy, and Grashow missed an opportunity to add specific instances, real-life stories, and personal accounts to demonstrate how adaptive leadership principles can be applied in different situations. These would provide a practical and relatable context for the abstract ideas discussed in the book, making it more useful and accessible to a broader readership. While the book presents a thorough framework for adaptive leadership, it would benefit from offering more precise direction on managing corporate political dynamics and power structures within organizations. Its relevance in real-world settings would be heightened by tackling the practical obstacles of influencing and cooperating with stakeholders, particularly in scenarios involving conflicting interests or resistance to change. Although the authors have included a chapter on system mobilization—organization or team—it primarily describes what might happen during adaptive change instead of how to navigate the challenges effectively.

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[45] Bolsinger, *Canoeing,* Kindle, Loc. 1821.

Aligning Reviewed Literature with the Thesis-Project

While George Barna's framework in *The Power of Vision* meticulously outlines the importance of a clear vision and mission for any organization, the journey for a new pastor transcends mere clarity. It requires a nimble dance between inspiration and adaptation, navigating the ever-shifting landscape of a living church community. This is where the insights of Tod Bolsinger and J. Robert Clinton prove invaluable.

Bolsinger brilliantly depicts a leader traversing uncharted water, urging us to embrace the unfamiliar as the fertile ground for growth in *Canoeing the Mountains*. The church today should not be hasty to resist going into unknown territories. Clinton effortlessly analyzes the qualities needed for this journey, highlighting the importance of maturity, emotional intelligence, and a willingness to learn in *The Making of a Leader*. These qualities should not be undermined, as they can serve as the compass that guides a pastor through the inevitable storms of change.

A VS and MS, however elegantly written, are simple ink on paper unless accompanied by adaptive leadership. The pastor must be a "weaver of dreams, not just a dreamer."[46] He or she must be able to translate vision into tangible steps, rallying the congregation in a shared journey towards a transformed future. Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky provide a somewhat theoretical framework that can be transferred into a practical toolkit for navigating this process, equipping the pastor with the tools to mobilize, motivate, and navigate the complexities of change.

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[46] Author unknown.

The success of the tenure of a new pastor hinges not just on the brilliance of their vision but on their ability to coordinate its implementation. By cultivating the qualities of a mature, adaptable leader, a pastor can transform a church from being a faithful entity to a thriving organization, leaving a lasting mark on the community they serve. The journey may be filled with challenges, but with the correct vision and mindset, a new pastor can guide the congregation towards a brighter, more fulfilling future.

Taking everything into account, as pastor in Springfield, MA, a city rich in cultural diversity and a microcosm of our changing world, the importance of a clear vision and adaptable leadership resonates deeply. The emphasis of George Barna on vision is crucial, but our experience guiding a multi-generational congregation underscores the need to go beyond clarity. We must be able to navigate unfamiliar waters, embracing change as an opportunity for growth and transformation. This is where the insights of Bolsinger and Clinton become invaluable, equipping us with the tools to shepherd the congregation through uncharted territory. Ultimately, the success of a new pastor, including the author of this thesis-project, hinges not just on the brilliance of the vision but on the agility and empathy with which we guide its implementation. By aligning with the diverse voices within our community and congregation while embracing our faith, we can chart a course that leads, not just to clarity but to a shared purpose and enduring transformation.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROJECT DESIGN

Introduction

Seeking to test the hypothesis and chart a clear path forward objectively, this chapter presents a multi-faceted project research design. Recognizing the potential for subjectivity in participant-observer research, the study incorporates both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.

Elements of the Thesis-Project

This thesis-project consisted of three elements. The first element involved the use of a questionnaire to evaluate the awareness of the congregation concerning the MS and VS of the church. After the administration of the questionnaire, the second element was the design of a curriculum on vision and mission clarity. In the third and last element, a training session was facilitated to provide training on MS and VS and how they impact the congregation.

To validate the thesis-project statement, it was necessary to assess ANC to test our hypothesis. This evaluation aimed to confirm the various assumptions regarding the congregation. Some of the critical assumptions included are the following,

1. Members are not aware of the VS and MS of the church.

2. It may be necessary to clarify the importance of the VS and MS for some members who may not fully understand their significance.

3. Some members may require help in repeating or articulating the VS and MS.

It was necessary to focus on objective data to validate the thesis-project statement. If our arguments were stated based on subjective, biased opinions, that could undermine the credibility of the research. Therefore, a well-structured questionnaire was designed with the intention of collecting quantitative and qualitative data from a diverse range of respondents, providing a solid foundation for our thesis-project.

Unpacking the Vision and Mission Statements:

A Deep Dive into the Heart of the Congregation

As a new pastor, understanding the comprehension of the congregation of ANC of the vision and mission of the church is necessary and vital. Assumptions about what members understand and expect can be unwise. We would need more than relying solely on our past experiences as members. Opinions can be subjective. We had the opportunity to gather many opinions through informal conversations, which may not often be factual and require surveys to assess the understanding from the congregation of the vision and mission of the church.

To fulfill the role as pastor effectively, a complete and unbiased understanding of the congregation was essential. This necessitated delving deeper than surface-level observations. Objective and empirical data that paints a clear and accurate portrait of the overall perspective and understanding of the congregation of the vision and mission of the church was needed. This data would be the key to unlocking a deeper understanding of the current state of the local congregation. It would reveal areas of strength and weakness, highlight potential misalignments, and, most importantly, provide the foundation for developing strategies to enhance the overall understanding and engagement with the vision and mission.

A Look at the Benefits of This Project

Understanding the grasp of the congregation of the vision and mission is a collaborative exercise. It is an ongoing process that requires continuous engagement and dialogue. By using these surveys and open conversations, the researcher sought feedback and diverse perspectives from members across all demographics. This information would refine the VS and MS, ensuring their clarity and relevance to the congregation.

By embarking on this path of reflection through data collection, we can establish a church where members are not just passive participants but active contributors to its mission. We can create a community where everyone feels empowered to share their talents and gifts to pursue a common vision and a brighter tomorrow. This journey will demonstrate our dedication to understanding, alignment and growth. It will involve listening, learning, and evolving as one united church family, ensuring that our vision and mission continue to guide us toward a future filled with purpose and satisfaction.

Evaluation Methodology Through Surveys

Historically, ANC has exhibited consistently low response rates to surveys. This lack of engagement stems from various factors, such as concerns about confidentiality. Some members have expressed apprehension about the privacy of their information. Furthermore, some members have expressed that the feedback they shared in the past when suggestions were solicited was not accepted. In the previous role of the author of this thesis-project as the

assistant pastor, he observed hesitation when gathering opinions through surveys, particularly

regarding the effectiveness of church programs.

A Jamaican proverb says, "A closed mouth won't catch a fly." Subsequently, the SP

opened his mouth to speak directly to the congregation. An information session during a

Sunday morning announcement segment was initiated to overcome this resistance. This

platform and approach allowed the addressing of the concerns directly. The purpose of the

surveys was emphasized, assuring confidentiality and anonymity for participants. The shortness

of the surveys and their voluntary nature was also highlighted. The aim was to increase

participation and gather valuable data by addressing concerns and building trust. Following this

crucial information sharing and clarification, two distinct questionnaires were designed and

implemented, each with a specific purpose.

Survey Design Description and Implementation

Two surveys were conducted. These are presented in Appendix A and C. These surveys

aimed to gather insights into the demographics, motivations, and engagement of the

congregation with the church. The data collected from these surveys will inform future

decisions and initiatives to enhance the church experience for everyone.

Survey 1: Membership Engagement Survey

This initial survey focused on validating the demographics of the congregation,

understanding their motivation for attending church and exploring their association with

specific words or phrases related to the church experience.[1] Similarly, it assessed their

awareness and understanding of the VS and MS of the church. This survey was distributed only

via emails from the database of the church.

Survey 2: Vision and Mission Statement Awareness

A second survey was conducted to test further the hypothesis that there is value for the

new pastor to clarify effectively and, if needed, refine the MS and VS of the church.[2] This survey

aimed to gauge the awareness and comprehension of the congregation of the VS and MS of the

church.

Respondents were asked to write the MS and VS of the church to assess comprehension

further and identify potential inconsistencies. This request stemmed from a discrepancy

observed in the first survey, where individuals claiming knowledge of both statements, yet later

needed more awareness or clarity regarding their distinction.

This survey was distributed both on paper and online to encourage broader

participation. The church has an average of 120 attendees, including children, on Sundays. The

survey reached around 70-80 church attendees[3] and collected 43 responses, providing valuable

data for analyzing the congregation's understanding of the Church's core values and goals.

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[1] Membership Engagement Survey - published 11/16/2022 using SurveyMonkey.

[2] Church Vision/Mission Statement – Survey (Published 5/8/2023).

[3] Data based on church email tracking software – MailerLite and the number of printed copies distributed.

Survey Results

Survey 1: Results of Baseline Assessment

1.   Demographic Insights and Membership Perspectives

Survey 1 served as the foundation for data analysis. All the results are presented in

Appendix A. The survey gathered the necessary information, including the following aspects:

- Demographics: Understanding the age, gender, and marital status of respondents

  provided valuable context for their perspectives.

- Church Sentiment**:** Evaluating the feelings of the members about the church.

- Mission and Vision Understanding: It was essential to assess how well members

  understood the church's core values and their influence on decision-making.

2.   Interpretation of the Data Collected

Key Demographics: The 35-54 age group was the dominant demographic in the initial

survey, with 23 respondents (85.19%)[4] falling into this category. This highlights the dominance

of this age group within the surveyed population. Interestingly, as it relates to the membership

tenure of the respondents[5], less than two out of five respondents (37.04%) are relatively new

to the church, having attended for 10 years or less. In contrast, over three out of five (62.96%)

have been part of the congregation for longer, attending for 11 years or more. The dataset, at

first glance, may not seem relevant, but this data provides insight into the maturity of the

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[4] Appendix A, Table 1b.

[5] Appendix A, Table 2.

membership and loyalty to this local congregation. Interestingly, the membership tenure

implies that respondents should be aware of the vision and mission of the church.

3.   The Connection of the Members to the Mission Statement

When asked how well they understand and connect to the mission of the church,[6]

nearly half (10 or 40.74%) of the 27 respondents indicated they relate well enough to the

mission of the church. Likewise, a significant portion (8 or 33.33%) reported feeling deeply

connected to the mission. However, a concerning number (7 or 25.93%) were either unaware of

the mission, did not understand it, or felt disconnected. Encouragingly, a combined 74.07% of

respondents either relate well to the mission or feel a deep connection to it. It is still

concerning that a quarter of respondents (25.93%) are not engaged with the mission of the

church.

4.   The Perspective of the Vision and Mission Statements

Over half (15 or 55.56%) of the 27 respondents believe having a mission and vision

statement is important for the organization. This suggests a strong focus on the purpose and

direction of the organization. Likewise, a significant portion (10 or 37.04%) felt it is important

for them personally to know the mission and vision, indicating a desire for individual connection

to the goals of the organization. However, a smaller group (2 or 7.41%) did not find personal

knowledge of the mission and vision statement important.[7]

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[6] Appendix A, Table 3.

[7] Appendix A, Table 4.

A closer look at the survey findings[8] shows some correlation of how the respondents

associate the vision and mission with decisions made in the church. Most respondents (77.78%)

indicated confidence that the mission and vision of the church significantly influence decision-

making. This finding strongly aligns with the core values and operational practices of the

church. Notwithstanding, a noteworthy 22.22% indicated uncertainty about this connection.

This could stem from various factors, such as a lack of clarity in how decisions are made, limited

communication about the decision-making process, or a perceived disconnect between stated

values and observed actions. Church leaders may need to showcase concrete examples of how

the mission and vision translate into action and encourage open dialogue to address any

lingering doubts.

5.   *Leadership Participation in the Survey and Awareness of the Vision and Mission*

Statements

Most respondents (77.78% or 21 individuals)[9] indicated they do not hold leadership

positions within the church. Among the six church leaders who responded to the survey[10], half

(3 or 50%) demonstrated a strong understanding of the mission, vision, and values of the

organization. Another third (2 or 33.33%) reported a somewhat good understanding. However,

it is important to note that one leader (16.67%) did not respond to this question, leaving some

uncertainty about the level of understanding. It is important to acknowledge that while half of

the responding church leaders showcased a strong understanding of the mission and vision, the

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[8] Appendix A, Table 5.

[9] Appendix A, Table 6.

[10] Appendix A, Table 7.

remaining responses paint a less clear picture. Addressing the unanswered question and

exploring the reasons behind varying levels of understanding could be crucial for ensuring

alignment and effective leadership within the organization.

Survey 2: The Story Behind the Data

The second assessment was designed to assess further the awareness about the VS and

MS. In this second survey, more church members were willing to participate. Consequently,

there was a larger respondent count than in the first survey. All the results of this survey are

presented in Appendix B. The following presents the summarized details of the respondents.

1.   *Tenure of the Members at the Church*

Despite the larger sample size of 41 respondents in the second survey, the percentage

of individuals reporting long-term attendance remained consistent. Similar to the first survey's

62.96%, a remarkable 65.85% of participants in the second survey[11] indicated attending the

church for over a decade, suggesting a stable and dedicated core membership.

2.   *Awareness of the Mission and Vision Statements*

While nearly half (48.78%) of the 41 surveyed members reported knowing the mission

statement, 51.22% did not. This data suggests the potential need for initiatives that raise

awareness and understanding of the MS of the church, fostering a more engaged and informed

membership.[12] However, a more concerning analysis of this second survey is seen in the

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[11] Appendix B, Table 1.

[12] Appendix B, Table 2.

awareness of the vision of the church. While 12.20% of surveyed members reported knowing

the VS, a significant gap remains. Nearly two-thirds (68.29%) were unaware, and almost 20%

(19.51%) did not respond, leaving a large portion of the membership without knowledge about

the vision of the church. This gap presents an opportunity for targeted communication and

engagement efforts.[13]

Course Curriculum on Vision and Mission Statements for Church Members

The third element of testing the hypothesis saw the author of this thesis-project and

some church leaders facilitate a forum called *Vision Night*.[14] This was a forum for engaging the

members with the vision and mission of the church. *Vision Night* was facilitated using the

course curriculum created to address vision and mission clarity. The complete curriculum is

presented in Appendix C.

The forum contrasted sharply with the quantitative data gathered through the two

surveys. Unlike the numerical findings of the survey, *Vision Night* provided a rich qualitative

diversity of participant reactions and interpretations. This qualitative perspective emerged from

lively group activities where participants actively engaged in a thought-provoking exercise:

correlating the church's overarching vision and mission with specific program adjustments

(start, stop, continue) aligned with the highlighted objectives stated in the vision and mission of

this local congregation. This exercise went beyond simple understanding; it revealed a deeper

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[13] Appendix B, Table 3.

[14] A session facilitated by the author of this thesis-project and some members of the leadership team on Dec.1st, 2023.

level of engagement, where participants actively envisioned and proposed practical steps to

bridge the gap between the aspirations of the church and its current programs.

Conclusion

Recognizing the limitations of traditional methods in conveying complex ideas like VS

and MS, the author of this thesis-project, in the third element of testing, utilized a feedback

loop approach and opted for an interactive approach. *Vision Night* emerged as a dynamic forum

that transcended a simple information session. The event incorporated elements like

presentations, Q&A sessions, and group discussions, promoting a two-way dialogue where

members would not only receive information but also voice their perspectives and concerns.

This hands-on approach aimed to not only raise awareness but also gauge member sentiment

and gather valuable feedback, potentially informing future refinements to the vision and

mission of the church or strategic planning efforts.

CHAPTER FIVE

OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

This thesis-project assessed the awareness and understanding of the congregation about the VS and MS of the church. The assessment was done to substantiate assumptions by the new pastor as he is to set forth a strategic outlook for this local congregation. In addition, the author of this thesis-project had a desire to shed light concerning the importance of a clearly defined VS and MS of the church while encouraging members to become active contributors in fulfilling its mission.

A Closer Look at How the Information Gathered Validates the Hypothesis

This research examined the critical role of refining and clarifying the vision and mission of a church, particularly for new pastors stepping into an already-established congregation or planting a new church. Drawing on the wisdom of Heifetz, Linksy and Grashow,

> The practice of leadership, like the practice of medicine, involves two core processes: diagnosis first and then action. And those two processes unfold in two dimensions: toward the organizational or social system you are operating in and toward yourself. That is, you diagnose what is happening in your organization or community and take action to address the problems you have identified.[1]

Therefore, the research explored potential discrepancies between established VS and MS and their actual impact on the day-to-day life of the church. The findings resonated deeply,

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[1] Ronald A. Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Martin Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World.* (Harvard Business Press, 2009). Kindle, Loc. 258.

revealing a common theme: a need for improved communication and engagement around these core principles and organizational objectives. This echoed particularly with the challenges faced by new pastors navigating the complexities of established communities. While the stated vision and mission are not hidden and known by some, the research suggested a potential disconnect between understanding and application, hinting at the need for refining these guiding statements to resonate more effectively with the congregation.

Imagine a new pastor, filled with enthusiasm and fresh ideas, arriving at a church with a long-standing history and established core values. The initial excitement can quickly transform into confusion if these guiding principles—vision and mission have not been effectively articulated or translated into concrete actions with any correlation of these fresh ideas being promoted by the new "pastor enthusiasm" within the community and congregation. This research suggests that such scenarios might be more common than we think, highlighting the importance of proactive steps for new pastors to bridge the gap between aspirational goals and the lived experience of the congregation. By promoting open dialogue, actively engaging members in the vision and mission, and ensuring these principles translate into practical initiatives, new leaders can ensure their aspirations align with the existing heart of the community, cultivating a sense of shared purpose and direction.

How a Course Curriculum Enhanced Understanding

of the Vision and Mission of the Church

Research outcomes that are measured both quantitatively and qualitatively provide an interestingly balanced view of the research hypothesis. This research provided both

quantitatively and qualitatively data points for much reflection. As a result, living and serving in a vibrant, multicultural community like Springfield, MA, allows us to witness the power of diversity firsthand. Our course reflected this richness, where observations during group activities revealed valuable insights beyond the numbers captured in the two surveys. For example, participants from diverse backgrounds demonstrated their ability to connect the vision and mission of the church to practical program suggestions. Observing how individuals from different cultures interpreted and applied these core values to real-life scenarios provided a more profound understanding than numbers alone could offer.

This qualitative approach proved especially valuable in our growing multicultural, multigenerational congregation, where various perspectives enrich our faith community. Witnessing participants from different cultural backgrounds and varied generations engage with the vision and mission, translating them into specific program suggestions, highlighted the importance of connecting these core values to the experiences people have lived. It also demonstrated the ability of these values to resonate across cultures, cultivating unity and shared purpose within our diverse congregation and community.

Implications and Recommendations for the Local Congregation

These findings highlight a critical need for improved communication and engagement. The disconnect between awareness and comprehension indicates that the VS and MS of ANC are not effectively reaching or resonating with its members. To address this gap, the following actions are recommended:

1. Ongoing Clear Communication: Develop concise and easily understandable language for MS and VS.

2. Increased Visibility: Integrate these statements across multiple channels, including church publications, social media, websites, and sermons.

3. Interactive Engagement: Organize workshops, discussions, and activities that will help members connect with and understand the meaning of these guiding principles.

4. Leadership Alignment: Ensure leadership actions and decisions consistently reflect the values outlined in the MS and VS.

By implementing these strategies, the church can bridge the gap in awareness and promote a deeper understanding of its core values among its members. This will ultimately strengthen the identity of the church and guide its future direction.

In brief, both surveys highlight a significant gap in the awareness of the members of the MS and VS of the church. Despite tenure or claimed familiarity, many need help to recall or comprehend these core values accurately. Addressing this disconnect through improved communication and clarification becomes crucial for ensuring alignment and meaningful engagement with the purpose of the church.

Implications and Recommendations for Similar Congregations and New Pastors

Drawing on the insights explored in this chapter, we should now consider their broader implications for congregations facing similar challenges and offer practical recommendations for new pastors navigating such situations.

1. New Pastors and Leaders: Stepping into any leadership role, regardless of specific ministry type, involves navigating unique challenges. The common aspects of being "new" are establishing trust, understanding the existing culture, and building consensus around a shared vision.

2. Key Findings for New Pastors: This thesis-project research confirms the crucial role of refining and clarifying the vision and mission of a church for a new pastor. It reveals a gap in the understanding of the vision and mission of the church, impacting its operations. Improved communication and engagement are essential, especially for a new leader guiding the congregation. The data collected in this local congregation suggests a disconnect between awareness and comprehension of the VS and MS, indicating a need for more straightforward communication and a stronger connection with members. This conclusion may not be unique to this local church.

3. Navigating Leadership: Any new pastor entering a similar context should consider these key points:

   a. Understand Communication Dynamics: Going into a new congregation to lead, the new pastor should prioritize analyzing existing communication channels. Seek to assess the understanding of the congregation regarding its vision and mission and explore ways to improve clarity and meaning.

   b. Promote Shared Understanding: Organize forums, workshops, or small group discussions to facilitate dialogue around the vision and mission, addressing concerns and reinforcing key messages.

c. Lead Strategically: Refine VS and MS, translate them into actionable goals, and develop a strategic plan with key stakeholders to address communication gaps and promote engagement.

d. Engagement Awakens Purpose: Beyond simply communicating the vision and mission, nurturing active engagement is critical. As a new pastor, imagine the roadmap of ideas coming alive through interactive forums or small group discussions. These forums can become spaces where the congregation not only grasps the "what" but also explores the "how"—how can they personally contribute to fulfilling the vision and mission of the church? Encourage open dialogue, listen to concerns, and allow members to express their perspectives and ownership of the shared vision.

Conclusion

The hypothesis of this thesis-project aims to assess the awareness of the vision and mission of the church among its members and evaluate the effectiveness of a training program in improving awareness. Subsequently, the data collected and observations made in this research provided the author of this this thesis-project with qualitative and quantitative information. This study provides valuable insights for new pastors navigating the process of refining and clarifying the vision and mission of the church. The journey as a new pastor is about more than just inheriting a legacy. It is about shaping a future hand-in-hand with your congregation. By prioritizing communication, engagement, and adaptive leadership, new pastors can address identified challenges and cultivate a more unified and purposeful

congregation. The new leader can bridge the gap between aspiration and reality, developing a

unified and vibrant community toward its shared vision.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY 1: MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Membership Engagement Survey for ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪ 2022

Overview of Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback is essential.

Hello, I am Pastor Robert Carter, a Doctor of Ministry student at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in the "Leading in Changing Church Culture" track. I am conducting a study on ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪ congregants. Your responses are anonymous and you can skip any questions you are uncomfortable with. This survey should take no more than **5 minutes** to complete.

Thank you for your participation.

* 1. What is your gender? ⚲ 0

◯ Female

◯ Male

* 2. What is your age? ⚲ 0

◯ 18 to 24

◯ 25 to 34

◯ 35 to 44

◯ 45 to 54

3. Which of the following best describes your current relationship status? ⚲ 0

◯ Married

◯ Widowed

◯ Divorced

◯ Separated

◯ Single, never married

◯ Prefer not to answer

4. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.) ⚲ 0

◯ White / Caucasian

◯ Hispanic

◯ Black or African American

◯ Asian / Pacific Islander

◯ American Indian or Alaskan Native

◯ Multiple ethnicity / Other (please specify)

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* 5. How long Have you been a member of this Church? 💬 0

◯ Less than one year

◯ 1-5 years

◯ 6-10 years

◯ 11-15 years

◯ 16-20 years

◯ 20+ years

6. What Do You Look Forward to most about coming to All Nations Church (Choose All That Apply)? 💬 0

☐ Sermon

☐ Worship

☐ Fellowship

☐ Hearing about church activities

☐ Children's Ministry

☐ Other (please specify)

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7. What three(3) words or phrases would you use to describe All Nations Church? 💬 0

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* 8. How well do you understand the mission of All Nations church? 💬 0

◯ I feel a deep connection with it.

◯ I relate to it well enough.

◯ I don't feel connected with it.

◯ I don't understand what the mission is.

◯ I don't know the mission

* 9. The Mission and Vision Statements of the church are: 💬 0

◯ It is import for me to know

◯ It is not important for me to know

◯ It is important for the organization to have a mission/vision statement

◯ It is NOT important for the organization to have a mission/vision statement

* 10. I believe the church's mission and vision drive decisions. 💬 0

◯ Yes, it does

◯ No, it doesn't

◯ Not sure how the mission/vision drives decisions

11. If you started attending All Nations Church in the last year, what's mainly responsible for bringing you through the doors for the first time? 💬 0

◯ A friend or family member.

◯ Posts or ads on social media.

◯ A special event or program.

◯ I saw the building and was curious.

◯ An online search.

◯ Going to Food Pantry

◯ Other (please specify)

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[                                        ]
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12. In what ZIP code is your home located? (enter 5-digit ZIP code; for example, 00544 or 94305) 💬 0

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[                    ]
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* 13. Are you a leader at the ░░ ░░ Church? 💬 0

◯ Yes

◯ No

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

I am very appreciative of the time you have taken to assist in my research and commit to utilizing the information gained to contemplate and implement worthwhile improvements. I will share these results with you upon completion of my dissertation. 💬 0

RESULTS OF SURVEY 1: MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Table #1a – **Marital Status**

Relationship Status	Female	Male	Grand Total
Married	11	4	15
Single, never married	7	1	8
Divorced	1	1	2
Separated	2		2
Grand Total	**21**	**6**	**27**

Table #1b – **Age Ranges**

What is your age?	Age distribution %	Count of Responses
35 to 44	29.63%	8
25 to 34	25.93%	7
65 to 74	18.52%	5
45 to 54	11.11%	3
55 to 64	7.41%	2
75 or older	3.70%	1
18 to 24	3.70%	1

Table #2 - **Church Membership Tenure Data**

How long Have you been a member of this Church?	Tenure distribution %	Count of membership tenure
20+ years	37.04%	10
1-5 years	29.63%	8
11-15 years	18.52%	5
16-20 years	7.41%	2
Less than one year	3.70%	1
6-10 years	3.70%	1
Grand Total	**100.00%**	**27**

Table #3 - **Members' connection to the Vision and Mission statement**

How well do you understand the mission of XYZ church?	% distribution of connection to Mission
I relate to it well enough.	40.74%
I feel a deep connection with it.	33.33%
I don't feel connected with it.	11.11%
I don't know the mission	7.41%
I don't understand what the mission is.	7.41%
Grand Total	**100.00%**

Table #4 - **Members' perspective of the Vision and Mission statement**

The Mission and Vision Statements of the church are:	% importance of the Vision & Mission
It is important for the organization to have a mission/vision statement	55.56%
It is import for me to know	37.04%
It is not important for me to know	7.41%
Grand Total	**100.00%**

Table #5 - Members' correlation of the Vision and Mission statement to decisions in the Church

I believe the church's mission and vision drive decisions.	% Associate Vision and Mission to decisions
Yes, it does	77.78%
Not sure how the mission/vision drives decisions	22.22%
Grand Total	**100.00%**

Table #6 - **Leadership participation in the survey**

Are you a leader at the XYZ Church?	% of Leaders vs. members
No	77.78%
Yes	22.22%
Grand Total	**100.00%**

Table #7 - **Leadership's awareness of the Vision and Mission statement**

As a leader, how well would you say you understand the organization's mission, vision, and values?	% of Leader's awareness of Vision & Mission	Count of Responses
Very well	60.00%	3
Somewhat well	40.00%	2
Grand Total	**100.00%**	**5**

Table #8 - **Member Sentiments: Words associated with the church.**

Question: What three (3) words or phrases would you use to describe XYZ Church?

Word	Frequency	Percentage	Description
Loving	13	22.80%	Most frequent word, emphasized focus on love and affection.
Family	10	17.50%	Strong emphasis on family, suggesting a close-knit community.
Caring	8	14.00%	Emphasis on care and support, suggesting a nurturing environment.
Friendly	7	12.30%	Open and welcoming atmosphere.
Welcoming	5	8.80%	Focus on inclusivity and creating a warm environment.
Helpful	5	8.80%	Importance of service and assistance.
Community	4	7.00%	Strong sense of belonging and shared values.
Worship	3	5.30%	Importance of faith and spiritual practice.
Giving	3	5.30%	Emphasis on generosity and contributions to others.
Faithful	2	3.50%	Commitment to religious beliefs and values.
Church	2	3.50%	Importance of the church as a central gathering place.
Others	10	17.50%	Each occurring once: Prophetic, prayerful, word-based, Devoted to community outreach, church runned by family members, education driven, Growing, changing, Future-focused, selfless, love, fellowship.

SURVEY 2: VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT SURVEY

This appendix presents the data collected from the second survey administered in this research study. It includes:

1. **Sample Survey Instrument:** A copy of the survey instrument used for data collection.
2. **Raw Data:** The raw data was collected from the survey participants.

2. Do you know the Mission Statement of the Church?

　　○ Yes

　　○ No

3. If you answered "Yes" above write the Mission statement Below

Enter your answer

4. Do you know the Vision Statement of the Church?

　　○ Yes

　　○ No

5. If you answered "Yes" above write the Vision statement Below

Enter your answer

RESULTS OF SURVEY 2: VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT SURVEY

Table #1 - Members' Tenure at the Church

How long have you been attending XYZ Church?	% distribution of tenure	Count of Responses
0 – 1 Years	19.51%	8
2-5 years	9.76%	4
6 – 9 years	4.88%	2
10 – 13 years	19.51%	8
14 – 17 years	7.32%	3
18 – 21 years	2.44%	1
22 – 25 years	14.63%	6
26 – 29 years	2.44%	1
30 – 39 years	12.20%	5
40 years and over	7.32%	3
Grand Total	**100.00%**	**41**

Table #2 - **Members' awareness of the <u>Mission statement</u>**

Do you know the Mission Statement of the Church?	% Distribution of knowledge of Mission	Count of Responses
No	51.22%	21
Yes	48.78%	20
Grand Total	**100.00%**	**41**

Table #3 - Members' awareness of the <u>Vision statement</u>

Do you know the Vision Statement of the Church?	% Distribution of knowledge of Vision	Count of Responses
No	68.29%	28
Yes	12.20%	5
No Answer	19.51%	8
Grand Total	**100.00%**	**33**

COURSE CURRICULUM ON

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

Target Audience: Church members and lay leaders.

Objectives:
- Participants will understand the differences between vision and mission statements.
- Participants will grasp the role of vision and mission statements in guiding the church.
- Participants will gain clarity on the church's current vision and mission.
- Participants will engage in collaborative reflection on how to align church actions with its vision and mission.

Materials:
- Whiteboard - to be used for group activity.
- Markers or pens
- Handouts with the church's vision and mission statements

Course Outline:
Introduction (15 minutes)
- Welcome and introductions (Co-facilitators)
- Briefly outline the course objectives.

Explanation of Vision and Mission Statements (30 minutes)
- Define and explain the difference between vision and mission statements.
- Discuss the key components of a vision and mission statement.
- Activity: Divide participants into small groups and have them analyze sample vision and mission statements (not from your church) to identify key components.

Our Church's Vision and Mission (30 minutes)
- Present the church's vision and mission statements.
- Provide a breakdown of both Vision and Mission statements.
- Encourage participants to share their interpretations and any questions they have.

The Role of Vision and Mission Statements (20 minutes)
- Discuss how vision and mission statements guide the church's decision-making and actions.
- Explain how these statements can help to unify and motivate the congregation.

Putting Vision and Mission into Practice (45 minutes)
- Introduce the "Start, Stop, Continue" activity.

- Divide participants into small groups.
- Explain how the activity will be conducted:
  - Each group will identify things the church should **Start** doing to better reflect its vision and mission.
  - Each group will identify things the church should **Stop** doing that are not aligned with its vision and mission.
  - Each group will identify things the church should **Continue** doing to uphold its vision and mission.
- Facilitate the activity and ensure all groups have sufficient time to discuss and complete the activity using provided Whiteboards.
- After the activity, bring the groups back together and have each group share their insights and recommendations.
- Discuss how the church can implement the ideas generated from the activity.

Conclusion (20 minutes)
- Summarize the key takeaways from the course.
- Encourage participants to continue reflecting on the church's vision and mission in their daily lives.

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"What Is a Mission Statement? 6 Successful Examples + Free Template - Thomas Griffin," December 22, 2023.

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